

حاشية الموفق على لنعة الموفق

HĀSHIYAH AL-MUWAFFAQ 'ALĀ LUM'AH AL-MUWAFFAQ



*A commentary on Lum'ah al-I'tiqād
of Imām Muwaffaq al-Dīn Ibn Qudāmah al-Maqdisī
by Shaykh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Yūsuf bin Ṣādiq al-Hanbalī*



AL-MADRASAH
AL-HANBALIYYAH

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

حاشيةُ الموفق على لمعةِ الموفق

Hāshiyah al-Muwaffaq 'alā Lum'ah al-Muwaffaq

A commentary by

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AL-HADITH FOUNDATION
AL-QADISIYAH

Transliteration Chart

ا	ā	ز	z	ف	f
ب	b	س	s	ق	q
ت	t	ش	sh	ك	k
ث	th	ص	ṣ	ل	l
ج	j	ض	ḍ	م	m
ح	ḥ	ط	ṭ	ن	n
خ	kh	ظ	ẓ	ه	h
د	d	ع	‘	و	w, ū
ذ	dh	غ	gh	ي	y, ī

• represented by double letters

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الحمد لله الذي هو كما أتى على نفسه
فالعبد لا يحصي ثناءً على ربه
والصلاة والسلام على أفضل خلقه محمد وآله وصحبه



All praise is for Allāh as He praised Himself due to the servant's inability to
enumerate praise upon his Lord, and prayers and peace upon the best of
the creation, the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ his followers and companions.

IMÂM IBN QUDĀMAH AL-MAQDISĪ

His name, lineage and title

He is Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad, 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Qudāmah b. Miqdām b. Nāsir b. 'Abd Allāh al-Maqdisī; a descendant of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. For the Ḥanābilah he is Shaykh al-Madhhab, while they also refer to him as one of the Shaykhān; the other being Majd al-Dīn (d. 652H), the grandfather of Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyyah.

His birth, early years, seeking knowledge and death

He was born in Sha'bān in the year 541H., in the village of Jammā'ī, Jabal Nāblus. For the first ten years of his life he remained with his family in Palestine, and began his memorization of the Qurān. In 551H. he and his family made hijrah to Damascus, due to the Christian invasion of their lands. Whilst in Damascus, Ibn Qudāmah completed his memorization of the Qurān, and in addition memorized a large number of narrations. Furthermore he memorized *Mukhtaṣar al-Khiraqī*; one of the primary texts concerning the fiqh of Imām Aḥmad. He remained in Damascus for ten years and began to journey the Islamic lands in search of knowledge around his twenties. In 561H. he travelled to Baghdad, which was considered at that time to be one of the main cities of knowledge; being the residing place of many luminaries of the time. On his journey to Baghdad he was accompanied by his maternal cousin al-Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Maqdisī (d. 600H); while he inclined towards the study of fiqh, his cousin inclined towards the study of hadith, nevertheless, they accompanied each other to lessons and acquired both. Ibn Qudāmah remained in Baghdad for four years, and again studied *Mukhtaṣar al-Khiraqī*, but this time under the tutelage of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (d. 561H). However, Allāh willed for the death of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir, only fifty nights after Ibn Qudāmah's arrival. He later studied under Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597H); then remained with Ibn

al-Manniyy (d. 583H). Under the guidance of his teachers he learned the fiqh of the Ḥanābilāh and its principles, excelling in them. He then returned to Damascus, before again embarking on travels to Baghdad as well as Mecca in 573H. in order to perform Ḥajj and meet other people of knowledge. After performing Ḥajj he returned to Baghdad where he remained for a year before returning to Damascus where he settled and began to author beneficial works in many branches of knowledge, one of the most famous being *al-Mughni*. Muwaffaq al-Dīn b. Qudāmah passed away on Saturday, during the day of 'Id al-Fiṭr in 620H.

Statements of the scholars about him

He was known for his vast knowledge, wisdom, good manners and wit. He was renowned as the Scholar of the people of al-Shām of his time. Although an independent work can be dedicated to his character and knowledge, this is not the proper place to embark on such an endeavour. Here, it is sufficient to mention a few statements of the scholars regarding him.

A close relative, and scholar in his own right, Diyā' al-Dīn (d. 643H) said about him:

'He was of good manners, he would hardly be seen except that he was smiling, he would tell stories and joke. I heard Bahā' al-Dīn (d. 624H). say; "the Shaykh, during readings would joke with us and be at ease. Once they complained to him about some children who worked with him, so he said; "They are children, they have to play and you used to be just like them."¹

Ibn al-Najjār (d. 643H) describes him as:

'The Imām of the Ḥanābilāh in the congregational Mosque (in Damascus), trustworthy, a proof, noble of figure, extremely generous, complete in intelligences, intense in

¹ Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A'lam al-Nubulā*, vol. 22, p. 171

worship, always composed, well-mannered, decent, pious, worshipping upon the statute of the Salaf, his face emitting light, and he was endowed with dignity and prestige. One would benefit from the sight of him, before even hearing his speech!²

Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728H), born only forty years after the death of Ibn Qudamah, said: 'No one possessing more understanding of the religion entered al-Shām after al-Awza'ī (d. 157H) other than al-Shaykh al-Muwaffaq.'³

His writings

Ibn Qudamah possessed a great amount of knowledge, deep understanding, and was a prolific writer. Due to these combined characteristics, his plentiful works; some single and others consisting of multiple volumes reached the level of excellence in knowledge; full of deep insight, contemplation and clear love for the words of Allāh the Exalted, and His Messenger ﷺ.

Ibn Rajab (d. 795H) remarks concerning this:

'Al-Shaykh al-Muwaffaq wrote many beneficial works about the (Ḥanbalī) Madhhab; it's principles and branches, in (the sciences of) hadith, language, asceticism and heart softeners. His writings in uṣūl al-dīn reach a level of high quality. Many of them (i.e. his books) being on the path of the muḥaddithīn, full of narrations from the Prophet ﷺ and reports from the Salaf and chains of narration. This was the way of Imām Aḥmad and the scholars of Narrations.'⁴

² Ibn Rajab, *Dhayr al-ʿalā Tahqīq al-Ḥanbalīyah*, vol. 3, p. 284

³ Ibn Rajab, *Dhayr al-ʿalā Tahqīq al-Ḥanbalīyah*, vol. 3, p. 286

⁴ Ibn Rajab, *Dhayr al-ʿalā Tahqīq al-Ḥanbalīyah*, vol. 3, p. 291

Lastly, some of his more famously known books will be enumerated in relation to the specific field of Islamic science. In fiqh he wrote: *al-Mughni*, *al-Kāfi*, *al-Muḡni'* and *al-'Umdaḥ*. In uṣūl al-fiqh he wrote: *Rawḍaḥ al-Nāzir*. In admonition, heart-softeners (*raqā'iq*), purification of the self (*tazkiyāḥ al-naḥs*) and *taṣawwuf*, he wrote: *al-Riḡqaḥ wa al-Bukā*, *al-Tawwābin*, and *Dhamm mā 'alayhi Mudda'u al-Taṣawwuf*. Here it should be pointed out that Ibn Qudāmaḥ did not author the well-known book *Mukhtaṣar Minhaj al-Qāṣidin*, as is wrongfully stated by certain publishers. This book was authored by Imām Aḥmad b Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qudāmaḥ al-Maqdisi, who died in 682H. Although, he was related to Muwaffaq al-Dīn Ibn Qudāmaḥ (the author of *al-Lum'aḥ*) he died some 60 years later. In 'ilm al-ḥadīth he wrote: *Mukhtaṣar al-'Ilāl al-Ḥadīth li al-Khallāl*. With regards to 'aqidaḥ, it is said that he was a stern proponent of the Atharī 'aqidaḥ and during his time he was one of its central figures. He penned many beneficial works elucidating and defending the Atharī 'aqidaḥ. Including, but not limited to:

- *Al-Burhān fī Mas'alah al-Qurān*,
- *Al-Ṣirāḡ al-Mustaḡīm fī Bayān al-Ḥarf al-Qadīm*,
- *Lum'aḥ al-I'tiqād*,
- *Ṣiḡaḥ al-'Uluww*,
- *Dhamm al-Ta'wīl*,
- *Taḥrīm al-Nazar fī Kutub Ahl al-Kalām*,
- *Faḍa'il al-Ṣaḥābah*.

SHAYKH YÜSUF BIN ŞÂDIQ AL-ḤANBALĪ

His name, kunyah and laqab

He is Shaykh Yūsuf Muḥammad b. Şādiq al-Ḥanbalī. His kunya is Abū Muslim and his laqab is Muwaffaq al-Dīn.

Some of the scholars he studied under

Shaykh Yūsuf b. Şādiq studied under scholars from both al-Azhar University (Jāmi'ah al-Azhar al-Sharīf) and scholars outside of it; from Egypt as well as other countries. The most important of the scholars he studies under is the Grand Shaykh of the Ḥanābilah, Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī, the main teacher of the Ḥanbalī madhhab in Jāmi' al-Azhar al-Sharīf. Shaykh Yūsuf also studied under Shaykh Aḥmad Ma'bad 'Abd al-Karīm, Shaykh Aḥmad 'Umar Ḥāshim and Shaykh Ḥasan al-Şāfi'ī; all three being from the Higher Committee of scholars of al-Azhar al-Sharīf. He also studied under Shaykh Ashraf Makkawī, Shaykh Ḥazım al-Kilānī and Shaykh Jamāl Farūq al-Daqīq, Shaykh 'Alī Şāliḥ al-Azhari, Shaykh Rabī' al-Ghaṭr, Shaykh Faṭḥī Hījāzī, Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasan 'Uṭmān and Shaykh Sa'd Sa'd Jawīsh. From outside of Egypt, Shaykh Yūsuf studied with the Pakistan based muḥaddith Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Shujā' Abādī. The Shaykh also studied worldly sciences at the Mīsr International University, in the faculty of Humanities/al-Asun, combining the study of linguistics, translation and English literature, the latter being the focus of his graduation thesis.

Some of the sciences and books he studied

Shaykh Yūsuf b. Şādiq studied various books and branches of Islamic knowledges under the aforementioned scholars. What follows is a general, yet far from complete summary. Under Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī he studied *Sharḥ al-Kawakib al-Munir* in uṣūl al-fiqh (he also studied this book with Shaykh Ashraf Makkawī), and in Ḥanbalī

fiqh he studied *Bidāyah al-Ābid*, *Akhṣar al-Mukhtaṣarat*, *Hidāyah al-Raḥib Sharḥ 'Umdah al-Tālib*, *Kashshāf al-Qinā'*. In ḥadīth, he studied *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* with Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī, as well as *Sharḥ al-Kharidāh al-Bahiyyah* in 'ilm al-kalām, and *Lum'ah al-I'tiqad* and *Qalā'id al-Iqyān* in Ḥanbalī 'aḳīdah, and also grammar (nahw), rhetoric (balāghah) and logic (mantiq). Shaykh Yūsuf also studied logic under Shaykh Hazim al-Kilānī and Shaykh Ḥasan al-Shāfi'ī, who taught him from *Mi'yār al-Ilm*. The latter also taught him ḥadīth and taṣawwuf. With Shaykh Aḥmad Ma'bad 'Abd al-Karīm he studied *Tadrib al-Rawī* in muṣtalāh al-ḥadīth, as well as *Fath al-Mughit Sharḥ Alfīyyah al-ḥadīth*. With Shaykh Jamāl Farūq al-Daḳāq he studied 'ilm al-kalām. Under Shaykh Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Shujā' Ābādī he studied *Musnad al-Shāfi'ī* and *al-Muwaffa'* in ḥadīth. He also studied ḥadīth under Shaykh Sa'd Sa'd Jāwīsh. Apart from studying grammar with Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī, Shaykh Yūsuf also studied *al-Ajrumiyyah*, *Sharḥ al-Makūdt* and parts of *Qaṭr al-Nada* under Shaykh 'Alī Ṣāliḥ al-Azhari, as well as *Sharḥ Ibn 'Aqīl 'alā Alfīyyah Ibn Malik* under Shaykh Rabī' al-Ghafir. Other books in grammar and morphology (ṣarf) were studied under Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasan 'Uthmān.

His ijāzāt

Apart from having specific ijāzāt in various books, Shaykh Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq also holds general ijāzāt in the Ḥanbalī madhhab, which he received from Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī³ and Shaykh Dr. Walid al-Manisī al-Ḥanbalī⁴, the president of the Islamic University of Minnesota and a senior member of the Permanent Fatwa Committee of the Assembly of Muslim Jurists in America (AMJA). Shaykh Yusuf b. Ṣādiq also received general ijāzāt⁵ from the Grand Shaykh of the Shāfi'ī

³ Shaykh Dr. Muḥammad Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī himself holds various general ijāzāt in the Ḥanbalī madhhab. He received ijāzāt from the late Saudi Shaykh of the Ḥanābilāh 'Abd Allāh b. 'Aqīl al-Ḥanbalī, as well as the mufti of the Ḥanābilāh in Duma Syria, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Dāmi and the Egyptian scholar Shaykh 'Abd al-Razzāq Khafājah al-Ḥanbalī.

⁴ For more information on Shaykh Dr. Walid al-Manisī, visit:
<https://www.amjaonline.org/scholars/dr-waleed-al-maneeze-ph-d/>

⁵ An ijāzah is a license given by someone who possesses authority in a specific text, subject, branch of knowledge, to someone who studied under him; indicating that this person is

madhhab, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Shahāwī, Shaykh Muḥammad Mahanā, Shaykh Muḥaddith Ismā'īl al-Daftār and Shaykh Mu'awaḍ 'Awaḍ Ibrāhīm; who was a hundred-and-four years of age, may the *Raḥmān* of Allāh be upon him.

His teaching posts

Shaykh Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq holds an official teaching post at Madrasah Shaykh al-'Amūd, teaching various Islamic sciences such as Ḥanbalī fiqh, ḥadīth and tafsīr. He is also the main teacher of the Ḥanbalī Madrasah online platform, which provides both short and long-term online courses, in both the Arabic and English languages, in subjects such as uṣūl al-fiqh, fiqh, 'aqidah and ḥadīth. Outside teaching, the shaykh has also worked as an English interpreter. His Islamic and worldly studies, coupled with his work and fluency in Arabic and English mean he is aptly qualified to teach the Islamic sciences to an English-speaking audience.

authorized to transmit and teach a certain text or subject. When one holds a general ijāzah in a madhhab, it means that someone is deemed overall qualified, by someone who himself possesses both authority and general qualification, to teach and transmit from every branch of knowledge and book within that particular madhhab. Thereby, his knowledge is considered of such high standard that he can transmit and teach without him having necessarily studied each and every book.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Remarks on al-Lum'ah: themes, organization and contextualization

The book *Lum'ah al-l'iqad*, which is by far the most widely known contribution of Ibn Qudāmah to the field of 'aqidah, is the main focus of this work. It deals with various topics of 'aqidah, such as sunnah in opposition to bid'ah (innovation), qada' (Divine decree) and qadar (pre-ordainment), issues concerning imān (faith), the ru'yah (seeing) of Allāh, the Messenger ﷺ and his Companions (Ṣaḥābah), interaction with rulers, orthodoxy in opposition to heterodoxy, and the relationship between ijtihād and taqlīd. Apart from these themes, this work is for the larger part dedicated to elucidating the correct belief with regards to two main topics. The first being Allāh and His Attributes (ṣifāt)⁸ and the correct approach to the texts that make mention of these Attributes, the enumeration of some of these texts, and the stance and approach that luminaries of the first generations took in this regard. The second being, the *Kalām*⁹ of Allāh and the reality of the Qurān. Approximately half of *al-Lum'ah* is concerned with these two topics and others directly related to them.

When browsing through *al-Lum'ah*, it becomes apparent that the topics contained within it are not the most well-organised, especially when compared with more structured books of 'aqidah. For example, the author inserts a discussion on the People of the Qiblah, and the continuous nature of Ḥajj and Jihād in between a passage relating to the companions and the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. It could be argued that these issues would be better suited in the section concerned with obedience to the ruler and leadership. The organisation of the book

⁸ A conscious choice has been made to only transliterate the Attributes of Allāh, and their related verbal forms, into English, instead of substituting them with the English translation; this is in order to obey the prohibition to do so. It must be stressed however, that the proposed translations given, are only related to the Arabic word in the context of human speech and their understanding. Therefore, the proposed English word is not to be understood as a direct translation of the Attribute of Allāh, as the meaning in relation to Allāh is unknown.

⁹ *Kalām* can be translated as 'speech'

however, does not detract from the content and the importance of the book whatsoever, and it remains to this day succinct and easy to understand. It is written in a straightforward manner, absent of difficult theological terminologies, clearly informing the reader what is required to be known in order for one to be truly upon the orthodox Ḥanbali-Atharī 'aqīdah.

Most books concerned with the Atharī 'aqīdah up to the time of Ibn Qudāmah, discuss the same topics as mentioned above with little variation. However, this must not be taken to mean that the author of a particular work only holds the beliefs mentioned in his book or that he differs in belief with another author who mentioned different issues. On the contrary, most books of 'aqīdah were written as a reaction to erroneous beliefs prevalent during the time of the author, or in order to provide answers to questions put forward to the author by individuals and groups. Therefore, books of 'aqīdah present not only the 'aqīdah that their authors found to be correct, but also shine light upon the historical context in which the books were written. This subsequently resulted in the variation found in works of 'aqīdah and in the importance each author allocated to a particular issue, and it is in this context that the books on Atharī 'aqīdah must be viewed and understood. In the time of Ibn Qudāmah there was fierce opposition between different schools of thought resulting in debates, exclusive behaviour and even clashes between individuals and groups of opposing schools. The tone was often harsh and polarizing and in some cases driven by political motives and this poured over into the written works as well. It is extremely important to keep this context in mind when reading classical books of 'aqīdah, regardless of the author or school of thought the book belongs to. An appreciation of this context means that not all the statements of an author, regarding other groups and individuals, can or should be applied uncritically in the modern day; and this approach should also be taken into account when studying *al-Lum'ah*.

The nature of the book is such that it is not in need of a detailed or lengthy explanation (sharḥ) which attempts to clarify difficult concepts or terminologies. Hence a short, to-the-point commentary (ḥāshiyah) suffices in order to grasp the full meaning of the book. Especially, a commentary which seeks to convey and expound the intent of the original author; i.e. a concise commentary from a Hanbali-Athari perspective, that explains this classical Hanbali-Athari text in such a way that will aid the original author in conveying his message, while facilitating the reader with getting acquainted with the text. This text is by no means in need of a commentary that aims to present or promote ideas and convictions that the author did not hold, nor is the original work of the author in need of being used as a mere tool or springboard to establish such goals. Unfortunately, this is exactly what has been the case with most translations and commentaries of the book, especially during recent times. Various Salafi groups have tried, on more than one occasion, to explain the book in a way that does not agree with what Ibn Qudāmah wanted to convey.

What is striking is that in general, these groups and individuals appreciate and follow what Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim (d. 751H) stated, yet, they fail to understand and follow a very important point that the latter put forward regarding the method of explaining texts. In *Ilām al-Muwaq'fin*, he states on more than one occasion that when an author states something in his books(s), and one (e.g. the translator or explanator) knows that the author meant a certain thing by it, he or she should not attempt to change that particular meaning by explaining away the authors intended meaning or changing it to something that fits his own personal opinion or agenda. Rather, one should try to keep as close to what the author stated as possible. Following other than this method of explaining texts, is a form of intellectual dishonesty. If someone disagrees with an author he should either author an original work himself, in which he can convey what he wants, or, when explaining a particular point in which one disagrees

with the author, the point should be kept intact and transmitted honestly, and only afterwards should the disagreement be mentioned along with its reasoning. This can be placed either in the text of the commentary, whilst making it clearly distinct from the original text, or by use of footnotes. However, he should leave the original text and its intended meaning, in all cases, intact.

A number of Salafi oriented commentaries of *Lum'ah al-Fiqah*, currently on the market, which have been translated into English and other languages, do not adhere to this concept of respecting the authors intentions. What one ends up with is a book which used to contain the original Hanbali-Athari 'aqidah, that is changed and distorted through its commentary and is eventually presented as Salafi 'aqidah. To confuse the general reader even more, even the term Athari 'aqidah is hijacked to make the work appear authentic, although in reality the Athari 'aqidah is not synonymous with Salafi 'aqidah. In contrast to this, it is the intent of this current work to present the true Hanbali-Athari 'aqidah put forward in *al-Lum'ah*, and accompany it with a commentary that will facilitate and aid the reader in better understanding the text from this perspective, as explained by one of the qualified Hanbali scholars of Egypt. It is hoped that with this effort, Muslims will rediscover *al-Lum'ah*, as intended by the author himself i.e. from a Hanbali and Athari perspective.

Text and commentary: the structure of the book

In order to stay as true as possible to the original text, the following structure is maintained. Firstly, for complete transparency and to aid those intending to memorize the text, the reader is presented with the vowelized Arabic text. In order to keep footnotes at a minimum, no references have been given for the Arabic text. Secondly, after each passage from the Arabic text, the English translation is presented. As the aim is to minimize usage of footnotes in the Arabic and its translation, only references to the Qur'anic āyāt have been given. Finally, the commentary is presented according to a traditional ḥashīyah-style,

and this is done to break away from the usual structure of English commentaries of Arabic texts, which rely on masses of footnotes which can, in some cases, exceed several pages and surpass the length of the original text. These footnotes detract from the reading experience and cause it to be fragmented rather than flowing naturally through the text and commentary. This style has also been selected to pay homage to the classical method of explaining Islamic texts, which apart from being an intellectual endeavour, also endowed the texts with an aesthetic dimension present throughout the whole work, which included rhyming titles, organic and easy-flowing text with commentary, and adornments in margins. With the *ḥaṣhiyah*-style, the commentary is made an integral part of the text and in this work differentiating the commentary from the actual text is done simply by presenting the original text in **bold** and inserting the commentary between brackets [. .]

In presenting the commentary, the intention is to make it flow naturally with the text it explains, by using additional words at times. Only in some instances is there a clear distinction between the original text and the commentary. While a conscious choice was made to avoid the use of footnotes for the Arabic and translation, full notes are given for the commentary. These include references for all *āyāt*, narrations and quotations. Only in rare cases could a reference to a specific source not be found, however these have been indicated where necessary. Some additional information is also given in the footnotes regarding particular points, but only when it was felt that doing so would improve the reader's understanding.

Before commencing with the actual text and its commentary, a few points must be mentioned in order to further contextualise the work and give a general outline of the science of *'aqidah*, providing the student a clear perspective while reading and studying the text. Due to their importance, these points will be discussed below as four separate chapters.

AN IMPORTANT DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE SALAF AL-ṢĀLIḤ AND AHL AL-ḤADĪTH

The Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ (the Pious Predecessors) are the three preferred generations that were praised by the Prophet ﷺ in his statements: *'The best people are those of my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them. Then, there will come people after them whose testimony precedes their oaths and their oaths precede their testimony.'*¹⁰ Although this statement appears to be clear, there has however been scholarly discussion regarding who exactly is included within the 'best generations'. This, mostly stems from disagreement surrounding the definition of the word 'generation' (qarn). It has led some to consider a generation to be a period of time spanning a hundred years. Subsequently, this group of scholars considered the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ as those who lived within the first three hundred years of Islamic history i.e. from 0 to 300 hijri; and thus opened up the possibility of more than three individuals succeeding each other. Others defined generation more conventionally, i.e. a number of people succeeding those before them, and therefore considered a generation as one individual or a specific group of individuals.

Although, the former definition is good, as it includes all the famous imāms like Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 150H), Malik (d. 179H), al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204H) and Aḥmad (d. 241H), it must be noted however, that amongst the people living during these three generations, were innovators and deviants. For example, those who persecuted and tortured Imām Aḥmad (i.e. the Mu'tazilah), such as Ibn Abī Du'ād (d. 240H). An additional problem is that various people and groups seek to include or exclude others from this definition. For example, some will try to include 'Uthmān al-Dārimī (d. 280H) from amongst the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ, yet according to others he was a mujassim¹¹. It therefore appears that there is a problem with the practicality of this definition as the criteria for including someone

¹⁰ Al-Bukhārī no. 6429 / Muslim no. 2533

¹¹ A mujassim is someone who has fallen into anthropomorphism and regards or depicts Allāh in such fashion. For example, one who holds the belief that Allāh is actually seated on the Throne, or that Allāh is a body comprising of different parts i.e. resembling created bodies.

from among the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ varies from one group to another, and as a result, who the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ actually are may vary from people to people. Therefore, it is better to keep the term Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ away from the discussion related to 'aqidaḥ, and not use the term 'aqidaḥ al-Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ, or even 'aqidaḥ Salafiyyah for that matter, but instead use the term 'aqidaḥ Ahl al-Ḥadīth instead. Thus, it is clear that developing a single definition by which one can determine who the salaf are is problematic and results in disputes.

Unfortunately, this term and its variations are often used argumentatively to force a certain belief on someone out of guilt and make one's opponent fear any disagreement. When it is said that such-and-such is the opinion of the Salaf, the majority of people would fear to disagree with it, and as a result simply submit to it. However, as previously pointed out, the Salaf consists of a range of different individuals, with some being trustworthy (thiqah) and upright (ʿadil), while others were weak (da'if) and even corrupt or open sinners (fasiq). According to the science of ḥadīth, all the of the companions were upright and trustworthy, however the same is not the case with those who came after them. Therefore, anyone from the subsequent generations is individually assessed to determine whether he or she is trustworthy or not.

As previously stated, use of the term Ahl al-Ḥadīth is more appropriate than the term Salaf al-Salih and therefore we are concerned here with the 'aqidaḥ of Ahl al-Ḥadīth, or more specifically the Athari 'aqidaḥ. When looking at prominent individuals who belong to Ahl al-Ḥadīth, the best representative is surely Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. During the time of the mihnah (inquisition)¹², there was a dispute between two parties namely the Mu'tazilaḥ, represented by Ibn Abi Du'ād, and Ahl al-Sunnah, represented by Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. There were of course others who stood against the Mu'tazilaḥ, but ultimately it was only Imām Aḥmad who did not submit to the demands of the inquisitors, and as a result endured physical and mental torture at the hands of his

¹² It refers to the period of state-imposed inquisition, which started in 210H, lasting around fifteen years and ended in 233H.

persecutors. The ordeal that he experienced cemented his role as the leader and defender of the 'aqidah of Ahl al-Hadith, and naturally this was carried by his direct students and the ones who followed them, eventually this 'aqidah became known as the Hanbali or Athari 'aqidah. For this reason, in some prominent Ash'ari books such as *al-Mawaqif* and *al-Maqasid*, there is found reference to a group of people they call Ahl al-Hadith al-Hanabilah. This indicates that it is possible that one can be Shafi'i in fiqh, yet Hanbali in 'aqidah (if they ascribe themselves to the Athari 'aqidah). Furthermore, this proves that the Hanabilah are Ahl al-Hadith, for even the Ash'arilah who disagreed with them consider them to be Ahl al-Hadith. If this is understood, it is known that when 'aqidah al-Hanabilah is mentioned, it refers to the 'aqidah of Ahmad b. Hanbal who is the best representative of Ahl al-Hadith, and it is synonymous with the Athari 'aqidah.

DETAILING THE 'AQĪDAH OF THE ḤANĀBILAH

Various books can be consulted and studied in order to obtain the authentic 'aqidah al-Ḥanābilah (or Athari 'aqidah). From the classical books of the early (mutaqaddimin) phase of the Ḥanābilah, the most important is *Uṣūl al-Sunnah* authored by Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal himself¹³. In addition, *Sharḥ al-Sunnah* by al-Barbahārī (d. 329H) and *al-Ḥaṭīyah* by Ibn Abi Dawūd (d. 316H) can be consulted. The latter should perhaps best be studied with the explanation of Al-Safārīnī (d. 1188H), titled *Lawā'ih al-Anwār al-Saniyyah*. However, due to its advanced nature it should not be engaged with during the beginning or intermediate level of study. Al-Qāḍī Abū Ya'la (d. 458H), considered to be the last of the early phase, also authored important works on 'aqidah, such as *Mukhtaṣar al-Mu'tamad fi Uṣūl al-Dīn* and *Iḥṣāl al-Ta'wīlat*.

From the middle (mutawassiṭīn) phase the poem *al-Qaṣidah al-Dalīyah* by al-Kalwadhānī (d. 510H) and *al-Iqtīḍā' fi al-I'tiqād* by 'Abd al-Ghānī al-Maqdisī are considered sound and important reference materials. Also, from this period is the famous *al-Lum'ah* of Ibn Qudāmah which is considered a well-established starting point¹⁴.

¹³ Most other books on the 'aqidah of Imām Aḥmad are attributed to him only, and his authorship of them is not firmly established. While some scholars do regard them as being his, others question his authorship. Therefore, it is best to limit oneself to the aforementioned book (i.e. *Uṣūl al-Sunnah*). In line with this, the authenticity of *Kaṣṣah al-Sunnah* of 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad has also been called into question and should not be used as a primary source for studying the Ḥanbalī 'aqidah. It should be pointed out that this does not mean that these are books deprived of benefit as they do contain sound material. Yet, they should be used with caution, and it perhaps may be more pertinent to use them as secondary study materials.

¹⁴ The works on 'aqidah authored by Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597H), who is considered to be a scholar from the middle phase of the Madhhab, do not represent the correct Ḥanbalī 'aqidah, as he is not consistent in his approach, mixing between the 'aqidah of the Ḥanābilah and Ash'arīyah. Also, one should not concern himself with the books of Ibn Taymiyyah (and his student Ibn al-Qayyim) and others who propagated their school of thought in matters of 'aqidah when studying in order to grasp the official Ḥanbalī 'aqidah. Although, considered one of the four major Ḥanbalī scholars in fiqh (i.e. Ibn Qudāmah, Majd al-Dīn, Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī), his opinions in 'aqidah are not decisive and are only selectively considered. Therefore, one should best take from other sources such as Ibn Qudāmah and al-Kalwadhānī, or the later day scholars who are in line with them, such as Ibn Balbān and 'Abd al-Baqī.

Books from the later (*muta'akhkhirin*) phase include *al-'Ayn wa al-Athar* by 'Abd Al-Bāqī (d. 1071H) and *Qalā'id al-Iqyān* by Ibn Balbān (d. 1083H), which is the summary of *Nihāyah al-Mubtadrīn* by Ibn Ḥamdān (d. 695H) whose book in 'aḳīdah is an important work in its own right. More advanced level books include those of al-Safārīnī, such as *Lawāmi' al-Anwār* and *Lawā'ih al-Anwār* (which is the aforementioned commentary of *al-Hā'iyyah*)¹⁵, however his books are very advanced containing difficult, and sometimes vague phraseology and laborious terminology. Therefore, it is perhaps best to not engage with these works until a thorough grasp of the subject matter has been attained, and instead it may be more beneficial to engage with the more accessible summary authored by Ḥasan al-Shaṭṭī (d. 1348H); entitled *Mukhtaṣar Lawāmi' al-Anwār*. Another advanced level text is the book *al-Aqāwīl al-Thiqāt* by Mar'ī b. Yūsuf al-Karmī (d. 1033H).

¹⁵ These two books should not be confused, although they have very similar titles. *Al-Lawāmi'* is the explanation of al-Safārīnī to his own shorter poem in 'aḳīdah, titled *al-Durrak al-Maḍīyyah*, while *al-Lawā'ih* is his explanation to the poem of Ibn Abī Dawūd.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SCHOOLS OF 'AQĪDAH

Many scholars from the latter generations state that Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah comprises of the Hanabilah, Ash'irah and Maturidiyah. This is plainly stated by the Hanbali scholars 'Abd al-Baqi in *al-'Ayn wa al-Athar* and al-Safarini in *Lawami' al-Anwar*¹⁶. However, during earlier phases of Hanbali scholarship, e.g. the time of Ibn Qudamah, this was not the case. Ibn Qudamah did not consider the Ash'irah from Ahl al-Sunnah, and he spoke very harshly against them, this being evident in *al-Lum'ah* and other works. It is understood however, that the social and political circumstances in which he lived played a critical role in shaping the way scholars from different theological schools interacted with each other. The domain of 'aqidah was often characterised by fierce debates, mutually exclusive attitudes and hostilities between partisans from different theological schools, e.g. the Ash'irah and the Hanabilah. With changes in these underlying factors, especially in later times, there was also a change in the mutual interaction and tolerance towards one another, resulting in more and more Hanbali scholars disagreeing with the strict approach of Ibn Qudamah and others towards the Ash'irah.

In general, the Ash'irah accept the 'aqidah of the Hanabilah and vice versa, except for a disagreement concerning the Attributes of Allah and the concept of *ta'wil* relating to them, which the Hanabilah strongly reject. Apart from this, they disagree with the Hanabilah on some other issues, although these are less severe in nature. This however, is not the place to delve into these, at times nuanced, differences, for the main focus is explaining the text of *al-Lum'ah* and providing a proper exposition of the Athari 'aqidah.¹⁷ With regards to the Ash'irah and the Maturidiyah

¹⁶ 'Abd al-Baqi in *al-'Ayn wa al-Athar*, p. 53 / al-Safarini in *Lawami' al-Anwar al-Bahiyah*, vol. 1, p. 292

¹⁷ This commentary is geared towards the novices and intermediate or general Muslim who wants to grasp the Athari 'aqidah and its basic tenets. At this level one should avoid delving into the differences between various groups and their representations of issues in 'aqidah. One should also avoid occupying himself with studying more than the basic issues of the 'aqidah he is committed to. This also means that at times the way an issue is handled and

and the differences between their positions in 'aqidah; these are less in number and even more nuanced when compared to the differences between the Ḥanābilah and the Ashā'irah (and the Māturidiyah for that matter). Their differences, however, are too advance to be discussed here and are outside the intent of the present commentary. Thus, for the sake of simplicity, these theological schools will be considered as one. Therefore, when it is said in this commentary that the Ḥanābilah disagree with the Ashā'irah, it is implied that they generally disagree with the Māturidiyah also. However, if a particular position of the Ashā'irah is stated, it does not necessarily mean that the position is shared with the Māturidiyah. Furthermore, this book should not be used as a reference for the differences between the Ḥanābilah and the Māturidiyah, as the latter were never the main focus of the Ḥanābilah unlike the Ashā'irah who have always represented the larger and more prevalent group from the various schools of Kalām.

It is important to note that the Ḥanbali 'aqidah, which has historically been called the Athari 'aqidah, is not synonymous with the contemporary Salafi 'aqidah which is often erroneously labelled as such. The Salafi 'aqidah as is the case with the other theological schools, has a distinct approach when it comes to the Attributes of Allāh. Additionally, they too disagree with the positions of the Ḥanābilah on other points of 'aqidah. However, as stated previously, expounding these differences is not the focus of this work.

presented in the commentary is less nuanced than it actually is, as the aim of this work is to provide a general understanding or framework. Once a student has grasped the basics, the study can be advanced by adding more detailed issues, nuances and differences of opinions to his understanding. This progressive method is a tried and tested method of studying that ensures the student is gradually exposed to more advanced and often complex issues. This approach to studying is applied across the board, holding true for various Islamic sciences such as 'aqidah, fiqh and ḥadīth. Finally, and perhaps an obvious point, the study of 'aqidah, or any other science for that matter, should be carried out under the supervision of a qualified teacher. It should in no way be an individual undertaking as studying without a qualified teacher inevitably leads to errors in one's understanding.

IJTIHĀD VS TAQLĪD

Allāh said: *'and ask the people of knowledge...'*¹⁸, indicating that taqlid in matters of fiqh is permissible. However, where matters of 'aqidaḥ are concerned, one has to acquire Shahādaḥ (belief with evidence) and attain certain knowledge (yaqīn). Taqlid, in this case, would only give probable knowledge (zann) and results in one following the opinion of another without knowing the evidence behind it. Simply put, there is no taqlid in matters of 'aqidaḥ.

This is contrary to what most of the modern-day Salafi groups propagate, by claiming that there is taqlid in 'aqidaḥ and ijtiḥād in fiqh. Furthermore, it is stressed that everyone is required to believe according to his own ijtiḥād in the primary issues of 'aqidaḥ, such as the oneness of Allāh, Him having no children, partners or parents, and Him having created and originated all of creation. In all these basic issues there is no excuse for someone to resolve to taqlid, instead ijtiḥād should be resorted to in order to arrive at certain belief based on evidences. However, particular issues that Allāh did not require his creation to know, are not included and ijtiḥād in these matters is not required; instead making taqlid of a qualified scholar in such a case is sufficient and can be resorted to.

With the above stated, one might wonder how a relied upon position (mu'tamad) can exist in Ḥanbali 'aqidaḥ when taqlid in primary matter has already been censured. The answer to this is that the relied upon position did not originate from taqlid, instead it developed through the individual ijtiḥād of prominent scholars of the Ḥanābilāḥ, who eventually reached the same conclusions. This is illustrated by al-Suyūṭī (d. 911H), when he mentioned that he never followed al-Shāfi'ī (d. 204H) (i.e. he did not do taqlid of the Shāfi'ī madhhab) instead he performed ijtiḥād and found himself agreeing with the imām in all but a few issues.

Hence, there is a clear difference between agreeing on something after the process of ijtiḥād, leading one to a particular conclusion, and

¹⁸ Qurān 16:43

following an opinion without knowing the evidence behind it (i.e. taqlid). Making ijtihad in 'aqidaḥ and reaching the same conclusions Imām Aḥmad reached is not particularly difficult, as the number of issues related to 'aqidaḥ are relatively few when compared to fiqh and therefore the probability of arriving at the same result is much higher.

THE CHAIN OF LUM'AH AL-ITIQAD

فضيلة العلامة شيخ الحنابلة محمد السيد الحنبلي قال:

ومن فوائد تلقي على الشيخ لا من الصحف: إحياء سنة التلقي وسنة الإسناد ومعرفة آباءك في العلم واختصار الوقت وتعلم الأدب وتسهيل الفهم فإذا خلعت لبتك في تعليم العلم بعد هذا أو ناظرت صاحب بدعة أو قمت لأمر من أمور الشريعة فحزنت تحزنت معك سلسلة الشيخ غيرة على ابنهم البار ونصرة لوريث النبوة وما يفتلها إلا المالمون.

The virtuous Shaykh, the 'alīmah, Shaykh al-Ḥanābilah Muḥammad al-Sayyid al-Ḥanbalī said:

'From the benefits of taking knowledge from shuyūkh instead of books is: the revival of the sunnah of taking knowledge from a shaykh and the sunnah of the chain (of narrators), knowing your fathers in knowledge¹⁹, shortening time spent, learning manners and correcting understanding. Then, if you have a sincere intention to teach knowledge after this (i.e. having learned and obtained a chain), or debate an innovator, or start doing things from the sharī'ah matters, and move towards this, then the chain of shuyūkh, with solicitude for their good son, supporting him,

¹⁹ Shaykh Muḥammad Sayyid is referring to the famous and well-known notion amongst scholars, in which they express that a student may consider, and refer to his teacher/shaykh as his father. In this sense, the chain of scholars is seen as a chain of father figures one has, connecting him to each subsequent scholar in the chain before him; so one's shaykh is his father, and his shaykh is the grandfather, and the shaykh before that is the great grandfather, and so on, going back to a particular scholar or even the Prophet ﷺ himself. Saying such a thing is not considered an innovation or the speech of Sufis, for Allāh has stated in the Qur'an: 'The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are their mothers' (Qur'an: 33:4), and thus makes the Prophet ﷺ their father, in a figurative sense. In addition, the Prophet ﷺ himself has stated with regards to knowledge that he is as a father, for he said: 'I am to you like a father: I teach you,' as narrated by Abū Dawūd, no. 8, and others. All this however, does not mean that a real tie of kinship is established or laws of inheritance are applied.

moves with you²⁰, because he is the heir of prophethood²¹ and no one understands this except the intelligent.’

With these beautiful and beneficial words in mind, what follows is the presentation of the complete Hanbalī chain of *Lum'ah al-Fiqah* as narrated from Shaykh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muslim Yūsuf b. Šādiq al-Hanbalī, and he said:

أعزني الشيخ حاتم الأنصاري الحنبلي قال: أعزني شيخ الحنابلة محمد السيد الحنبلي أعزنا الشيخ عبدالله بن محمود بن محمد السيد الدومي الشاذلي الحنبلي، قال: حدثنا به والذي محدث الفقيه الشيخ محمود السيد بن محمد السيد الدومي الحنبلي، عن شيخه مصطفى بن أحمد الشطي الحنبلي، عن أبيه أحمد الشطي الحنبلي، عن العلامة حسن بن عمر الشطي الحنبلي، عن مصطفى بن سعد الرحباني الحنبلي، عن محدث الشام محمد بن أحمد السقارني الحنبلي، عن شيخه التلميذ عن قدوة الحنابلة في زمانه علما وعلماء أبي عبد الله محمد بن بدر الدين البلباني الصالح في الصالحة من الشام صاحب فلاح العقاب وكتب سلسلته فقال: أروي الفقه والطريقة القادرية وغيرهما مما يجوز لي وهي رواية عن شيخ الإسلام الشهاب أحمد بن علي الوطائي المفلحي عن شرف الدين موسى بن سالم الحجوازي وهو القاضي برهان الدين بن مفلح وهذا عن والده نجم الدين بن مفلح عن والده القاضي شمس الدين صاحب الفروع عن الشيخ تقي الدين بن تيمية عن شمس الدين أبي أبي عمر عن عمه شيخ الإسلام موفق الدين ابن قدامة المقدسي.

²⁰ The possessor of the chain should envision this moving of the chain of shaykhīh 'when he is debating, teaching or doing something from the shari'ah, as if his fathers are present with him, backing him, supporting him, and strengthening him.

²¹ Abū Dawūd, no. 3641 al-Tirmidhi, 2683, and others narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'The scholars are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets leave neither *dīnār* nor *dirham*, leaving only knowledge, and he who takes it takes an abundant portion.'

حاشيةُ الموفقِ على لُمعَةِ الموفقِ

Hāshiyah al-Muwaffaq 'alā Lum'ah al-Muwaffaq

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

قال الشيخ الإمام مؤلف الذي أبو محمد عبد الله بن أحمد بن محمد بن قدامة
المقدسي رحمه الله تعالى:

Imām Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Ahmad
b. Muḥammad b. Qudāmah al-Maqdisī, may Allāh, the Exalted, have
mercy on him, said:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

المحمد لله المحمود بكلّ لسان، المنعبد في كلّ زمان، الذي لا يخلو من جلّيه
مكان، ولا ينفله شأن عن شأن، جلّ عن الأشباه والأنداد، وتوّج عن الصّاحبة
والأولاد، ونفَذ حكمته في جميع العباد، لا تُثقله العقول بالظكير، ولا تتوهّمه القلوب
بالضّغير، «ليس كيعقوب شيء وهو السّميع البصير»، له الأسماء الحسنى والصفات
الغلى، «الرّحمن على العرش اشقرى • له ما في السمّوات وما في الأرض وما بينهما
وما تحت الثرى • وإن تخبّروا بالفضل فإنه يعلم السرّ وأخفى»، «أعظم بكلّ شيء
جلّنا»، «ولهم كلّ مغلوبي عزة وحكّنا، ووسّع كلّ شيء رحنه وعلّنا»، «يظلم ما بين
أيديهم وما خلفهم ولا يحيطون به جلّنا»، موصوف بما وصف به نفسه في كتابه
العظيم، وعلى لسان نبيه الكريم.

In the name of Allāh, al-Rahmān, al-Rahīm.

All praise is due to Allāh, the one praised by every tongue, worshipped
at every time, there is no place that is free from His *ʿIlm*, nor does one
affair preoccupy Him over another. He is far beyond any equal or
rival, as well as being free of the need for a wife or children. His rule is
executed over all of His servants. No intellect can derive an example of

Him with pondering, nor can the heart attempt to depict Him. *There is nothing equal to Him, and He is al-Sami, al-Basir*²². To Him belong the best of Names and most exalted Attributes. *'al-Rahmān did istawa over the Throne. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, and what is under the ground. And if you speak aloud, then verily, He ya'lamu the secret and that which is yet more hidden. Allāh, there is no god but He. To Him belong the best of Names.*²³ His *ʿilm* encompasses everything. He subjugates all creatures by His *'izza* and rule, and His *Rahmah* and *ʿilm* encompass everything. *He ya'lamu what is before them, and what is behind them, while they do not encompass it with knowledge.*²⁴ He is described with what He has attributed to Himself in His Magnificent Book and upon the tongue of His honourable Prophet.

Commentary: The Author's Introduction

In the name of Allāh, *al-Rahmān*²⁵, *al-Rahīm*²⁶

All praise is due to Allāh, the one praised by every tongue, worshipped at every time, there is no place that is free from His *ʿilm*²⁷ [meaning: His *ʿilm* is everywhere. Yet, while His *ʿilm* is everywhere, He, *bi-Dhātihī*²⁸, is not everywhere. Saying He is everywhere *bi-Dhātihī*, is a grave mistake and leads one to anthropomorphism (*tajsim*), and this may be *kufr* (disbelief)²⁹. So, when asked where Allāh is, the correct response is to say: Allāh is *fi al-samā'*³⁰, while He is everywhere with His *ʿilm*], nor does one affair preoccupy Him over another. He is

²² Qurān 42:11

²³ Qurān 20:5-8

²⁴ Qurān 20:110

²⁵ *Rahmān* can be translated as 'merciful'

²⁶ *Rahīm* can be translated as 'compassionate'

²⁷ *ʿilm* can be translated 'knowledge'.

²⁸ *Bi-dhātihī* is often translated as 'with his essence'.

²⁹ It must be pointed out that an innovation (*bid'ah*) leading to *kufr* (disbelief) may instead be *fiṣq* (abhorrent sin). This is dependent upon the one committing the act or holding a belief being a *mujtahid* or a *muqallid*. If one's *ijtihad* leads him to such an act or belief, it is *kufr*; when done out of following a *mujtahid*, it is considered *fiṣq*.

³⁰ *Fi al-samā'* is often translated as: above the Heavens, however, this must not be understood as Allāh being in a physical direction, nor should it be taken in such a way that the heavens encompass Him by translating it as 'in'. Allāh's refuge is sought from that. It is better in all cases to stick to the Arabic wording: Allāh is *fi al-samā'* or Allāh *fi al-samā'*, as per the text

far beyond any equal or rival, as well as being free of the need for a wife or children. His rule is executed over all of His servants. No intellect can derive an example of Him with pondering, nor can the heart attempt to depict Him [for one cannot ever imagine how Allāh is. All Muslims are agreed upon the reality of His *Dhat*³¹ being unknown. Hence, if this is the reality of His *Dhat*, then it must also be the reality of His Attributes. For, it is known that attributes are related to the essence of something that they are attributed to. Therefore, when one does not know the reality of the essence, one does not know the reality of the attribute(s) either. It is however possible that a result or something related to a particular attribute is understood, for example the *Rahmah*³² of Allāh indicates that He will forgive and not punish. Yet, the reality of the attribute itself (e.g. *Rahmah*) cannot be described or defined, for it cannot even be imagined in the mind]. *There is nothing equal to Him* [in His comparison], *and He is al-Sami*, *al-Baṣir*³³ [restricting oneself to saying *al-Sami*³⁴, *al-Baṣir*³⁵ as it is prohibited to translate Allāh's Names or Attributes³⁶. Consequently, one should use the Arabic words such as: *Yad*³⁷, *Wajh*³⁸, *Sam*³⁹ and *Baṣr*⁴⁰ and avoid the use of their translations in other languages, instead resorting only to transliteration. *To Him belong the best of Names and most exalted Attributes. 'al-Rahmān istawā' over the Throne. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and the earth, and what is between them, and what is under the ground. And if you speak aloud, then verily, He ya 'alamu*⁴¹ *the secret and that which is yet more*

³¹ *Dhat* can be translated as 'essence (of something)'

³² *Rahmah* can be translated as 'mercy'

³³ Qur'an 42:11

³⁴ *Sam*' can be translated as 'hearing'

³⁵ *Baṣir* can be translated as 'seeing'

³⁶ See, Abd al-Aziz al-Zuhayrī, *Maḥṣn al-ṣifāt wa 'ulūm al-Qur'an*, lines 15-16. These lines are concerned with the Qur'an in general. If this is the case with the Qur'an in general, then it is even more applicable to the Attributes in particular. The prohibition of translating the Attributes of Allāh is the chosen opinion of Shaykh Yūsuf b. Ṣādiq al-Ḥanbalī.

³⁷ *Yad* can be translated as 'hand.'

³⁸ *Wajh* can be translated as 'face'

³⁹ *Sam*' can be translated as 'hearing'

⁴⁰ *Baṣr* can be translated as 'sight'

⁴¹ *Istawā* can be translated 'He rose'

⁴² *Ya 'alamu* can be translated 'He knows'

hidden. Allāh, there is no god but He. To Him belong the best of Names.⁴³ His ʾIlm encompasses everything. He subjugates all creatures by His ʾIzzah⁴⁴ and rule, and His Raḥmah and ʾIlm encompass everything. He ya lamu what is before them, and what is behind them, while they do not encompass it with knowledge.⁴⁵ He is described with what He has attributed to Himself in His Magnificent Book and upon the tongue of His honourable Prophet.

⁴³ Qurān 20:5-8

⁴⁴ ʾIzza can be translated as 'might/power'.

⁴⁵ Qurān 20:110

THE OBLIGATION TO ACCEPT THE ĀYĀT AND AHĀDĪTH RELATED TO ALLĀH'S ATTRIBUTES

وَكُلُّ مَا جَاءَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ أَوْ صَحَّ عَنْ الْمُصْطَفَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنْ صِفَاتِ الرَّسُولِ وَجِبَتْ
الْإِيمَانُ بِهِ وَتَقَبُّلُهُ بِالتَّسْلِيمِ وَالْقَبُولِ، وَرُكُودُ التَّعَرُّضِ لَهُ بِالرُّدِّ وَالْقَابِلِ، وَالشُّعْبُ وَالْتَمِيلِ. وَمَا
أَشْكَلُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَجِبَتْ إِثْبَاتُهُ لَمَطًا، وَرُكُودُ التَّعَرُّضِ لِمَنْعَاهُ، وَرُكُودُ جِلْمَتِهِ إِلَى قَائِلِهِ، وَتَجَقُّلُ
عَهْدَتِهِ عَلَى نَائِلِهِ، اتِّبَاعًا لِمَطَرِ الرَّاسِخِينَ فِي الْجِلْمِ، الَّذِينَ اتَّقَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي كِتَابِهِ
الْمُحِيطِ بِقَوْلِهِ شُبْحَانَهُ وَقَتَالَى: ﴿وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا﴾،
وَقَالَ فِي ذِمِّ مُتَتَبِعِي الْقَابِلِ لِمَنْعَاهُ تَنْزِيلُهُ: ﴿فَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ رَيْبٌ فَهُمْ يَنْتَابُونَ مَا نَشَاءُ
بَيْنَهُ إِيْمَاءً الْيَقِينِ وَالْإِيْمَاءُ تَأْيِيدُهُ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْيِيدَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾، فَجُفِلَ الْإِيْمَاءُ الْقَابِلِ عَلَامَةً عَلَى
الرُّيْبِ وَفَرَّقَتْهُ بِالْإِيْمَاءِ الْيَقِينِ فِي الدِّمِّ، ثُمَّ عَجَبْتُهُمْ عَمَّا أُمِّلُوهُ، وَقَطَعَ أطماعَهُمْ عَمَّا فَصَدُّوهُ،
بِقَوْلِهِ شُبْحَانَهُ: ﴿وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْيِيدَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾.

Everything that has come in the Qurān and that is authentically narrated from al-Muṣṭafā ﷺ concerning the Attributes of al-Raḥmān; it is obligatory to have faith in it and receive it with submission and total acceptance. We must abandon opposing it with rejection (al-radd), false interpretation (ta'wīl), comparison (tashbīḥ) and making examples (tamthīl). As for what appears unclear, then we are obligated to affirm its wording and abandon opposing to its meaning. And we refer knowledge thereof to the One who stated it, and we entrust it to the one who transmitted it, following the example of those who are firmly grounded in knowledge; those whom Allāh has praised in His manifest Book, with His saying, free of imperfections and Exalted is He: *'And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: We believe in it; the whole of it is from our Lord.'*⁴⁰ And Allāh says, while blaming and criticizing those who seek interpretation of the unclear *āyāt* of His revelation: *'As for those in whose*

⁴⁰ Qurān 3:7

hearts there is a deviation, they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking mischief (*fitnah*) and seeking for its hidden meanings, but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allāh⁴⁷. Thus, Allāh made the seeking of hidden meanings a sign of deviation. And He has, in dispraise of it, equated it with seeking after mischief. Then, He placed a barrier between them and that which they aspire to, and He cuts off their ambition from what they seek after, by His saying, free of imperfections is He: *but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allāh*.⁴⁸

Commentary: The Obligation to Accept the Āyāt and Aḥādīth related to Allāh's Attributes

Everything that has come in the Qurān is accepted by Muslims, for it has come by way of mutawātir aḥādīth; meaning, it is narrated by such a large number of individuals that it is inconceivable that they would have agreed upon a lie. This, from the perspective of the sharī'ah gives certainty) and that is authentically narrated from al-Muṣṭafā ﷺ (regarding this, Najm al-Dīn al-Ṭūfī (d. 716H) stated that: 'the texts (i.e. the Qurān and ḥadīth) concerning the Attributes are of three levels: 1) authentic (ṣaḥīḥ), whose authenticity is agreed upon by the scholars of ḥadīth; 2) weak (da'if), whose weakness is agreed upon (by the aforementioned scholars); 3) those that are differed over with regards to their acceptance (i.e. some considering them weak while other considering them authentic). With respect to the first, it is with what the Attributes can be affirmed with; while the second and third are not considered in this issue'⁴⁹. Thus, anything authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ that gives certainty must be accepted, for in primary matters of 'aqidah there is no reliance on that which does not give certainty. This however does not mean that only the mutawātir aḥādīth give certainty, thereby excluding the *ahād* narrations. For the latter can give certainty, if certain conditions are met such as: the acceptance by the vast majority

⁴⁷ Qurān 3:7

⁴⁸ Qurān 3:7

⁴⁹ Al-Ṭūfī, *Al-Inṣirāṭ al-Islamiyyah*, vol. 2, p. 702.

of scholars (e.g. *ahād* narrations mentioned in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* works of al-Bukhārī and Muslim), or the narrators in its chain being of very high standing (e.g. a *ḥadīth* narrated by Ahmad b. Ḥanbal, from al-Shāfiʿī, from Mālik, from Nāfi' (d. 117H), from Ibn 'Umar (d. 83H). Also, when the narration is well-known (*mashhūr*) according to its technical meaning⁵⁰, it may lead to certainty, although this is not necessarily the case. These are additional traits, amongst others, that could give certainty, or may let it reach that level; however, since the primary concern of this work is 'aqidah, further and more detailed discussion regarding the sciences of *ḥadīth* are not appropriate here. It is sufficient to know in general that *ahād* *ahādīth* should be further investigated to ascertain whether certain characteristics are present in order to determine whether certainty can be established through them, and if they are therefore suitable to be used in primary issues of 'aqidah] concerning the Attributes of al-Raḥmān⁵¹ [from the specific wording used by the author, it is

⁵⁰ It should be pointed out that there is a difference between the technical (*istilāḥī*) and non-technical (*ghayr istilāḥī*) meaning of well-known (*mashhūr*). The technical meaning, which is assigned by the scholars of *ḥadīth* is: the report that has three or more narrators at every level of its chain. Shaykh Yūsuf favours the opinion that it should be at least four narrators on every level.

⁵¹ Ibn 'Aqīl (d. 513H) stated with regards to the Attributes (and the original text is in **bold**, while the commentary of Shaykh Muwaffaq al-Dīn Yūsuf b. Šādiq is between brackets []):

One does not affirm an Attribute, upon which one's believe is, except by **decisive (clear-cut) evidence**, (that is) either: 1) a text from the Book of Allāh; 2) or the **mutawāṭir** *Sunnah* of His Messenger; [and in what follows Ibn 'Aqīl gives examples of *tawāṭur* transmission] which the Muslims [meaning, the scholars] have agreed on transmitting [although, practically it is nearly impossible to find this type of *tawāṭur*]. Nonetheless, theoretically, this would be the highest level of *tawāṭur*, or the **majority of them (agreed)** [i.e. the scholars. And this type is below the aforementioned level, and more commonly occurring, such as the *ḥadīth*. *Whosoever tells a lie against me intentionally then surely let him occupy his seat in the Hellfire.* and it was reported by more than one hundred Companions; and the scholars from all eras], or those who are not allowed to lie - from amongst the trustworthy (thiqat) [the righteous individuals who have a good memorization] whose 'aqidah is sound [having the trustworthy as reporters in the chain is not a condition for *tawāṭur*. So, if a disbeliever relates something, and the number is overwhelming, to the extent that it is impossible for them to have agreed upon a lie, then the statement is accepted, due to it being *mutawāṭir*. Although, it is as if Ibn 'Aqīl, through this specific statement of his, wants to convey that he does not accept this fact with regards to 'aqidah. Thus, matters of aqidah are only accepted when it comes from those who are *thiqat* and have sound 'aqidah; or 3) the consensus of the Ummah about evidence that they were certain about [and consensus is of two types: the first is the type that takes its value from the agreement of all the scholars on a specific thing; and the second is the type of consensus that takes its value from the Qurān and *Sunnah*. For example, the obligation

understood that he specifically meant issues concerning the Attributes of Allāh. So, these reports need to be authentic and give certainty. In other issues of 'aqidah one may accept something which does not give (complete) certainty. For example, describing details regarding Paradise using ahādīth that are less than authentic, i.e. not reaching the level of certainty. Consequently, belief in Paradise and some of its blessings are proven with certainty, while other blessing and specific details may not be; it is obligatory to have faith in it and receive it with submission and total acceptance [because it contains things which cannot be understood as Allāh did not want us to understand it (fully)]⁵².

of prayer, and it is not obligatory due to the consensus of scholars (which is the first type of consensus that is mentioned), but instead it is obligatory because evidences from the Qur'an and Sunnah indicate its obligation clearly, and Ibn 'Aqil referred to this second type of consensus) or 4) logical proof (which gives certainty) [when it comes to matters of 'aqidah, one requires certainty, and this is gained by each one of the four mentioned evidences, including logical proofs. By logical proof it is meant, one ponders and considers the universe and reaches the conclusion that Allāh exists, that He is the One whose existence is obligatory and necessary (wajib al-wujūd). And if He is as such, than He is al-'Alīm, and al-Hayy, and these are in fact Attributes. The mind can independently conclude these Attributes amongst others, without the need for a text, yet it cannot independently conclude and know that He is Samī' or has a Yad or a Wajh, as with regards to these Attributes, which are often termed the reported Attributes (ḡāṭi khabariyyah), the mind is dependent on the Qur'an and Sunnah]. By other than these (aforementioned) ways, it is not possible to affirm an Attribute of Allāh, Exalted is He. (Thus it is impermissible to affirm them) through analogy (qiyās); the opinion of one of the companions; or the opinion of some scholars in an era, while other scholars did not approve; or a Ḥadīth report, that has not been received by the whole Ummah of scholars with acceptance [meaning, they did not approve of it and did not accept it as evidence]. But rather, it is like that (which we have stated), because other than these four types of evidence, meaning: 1) the Book of Allāh, 2) the mutawātir Sunnah of His Messenger, 3) consensus of the Ummah and 4) logical proof, do not give certainty nor are they decisive (clear-cut); rather they establish probable practices [which are related to fiqh, and ṡūl of 'aqidah is not a part of this]. The Attributes of Allāh, Exalted is He, cannot be affirmed based on probability or preponderance of probability (ḡhalabah al-ṡann); as is the case with His Dhāt, Exalted is He [and the speech concerning His Attributes, is a branch of the speech concerning His Dhāt. Which in essence means, that which is true for the Dhāt, is also true for His Attributes. For example, if His Dhāt is pre-existent (qadīm), then His Attributes are also pre-existent as well. So, if the existence of Allāh cannot be accepted based on probability (ṡann), then likewise it is not accepted for His Attributes] which cannot be affirmed with this [meaning, these ways other than the four approved ways mentioned above]. It is not permissible (and possible) to establish (and prove) it [i.e. His Dhāt and Attributes] with this [i.e. probable evidence (ḡalīl al-ṡann)].

⁵² In *Tahṡīm al-Naṡṡ*, p. 51, Ibn Qudāmah says: "We do not need to know the meanings of what was intended by Allāh, the Exalted, from His Attributes, Mighty and Majestic (is he). Indeed, He did not intend regarding them any action, nor did He connect to them any responsibility

In this regard Ibn 'Abbās said: *There is nothing in this life similar to what is in paradise, except by the names*⁵⁴; meaning, when one enters paradise, one will not find anything other than the names of things. For example, one will see things that are called milk (laban) or honey ('asl), yet they will be completely different from what one knew to be milk and honey in this worldly life. If our knowledge and realisation is insufficient to know and understand things in Paradise which are created, then this is even more the case when it concerns knowing and understanding Allāh and His Attributes. Therefore, willing submission and total acceptance regarding the Attributes is required; and everyone is obligated to believe, submit and accept, from the layman who cannot read and write to the erudite scholar]. **We must abandon opposing it with rejection (al-radd), false interpretation (ta'wil), comparison (tashbīh) and making examples (tamthīl). As for what appears unclear (meaning, what is unclear or not obvious (mutashābih) in its meaning⁵⁴), then we are obligated to affirm its wording and abandon opposing to its meaning** [by explaining it or giving a meaning to it. Thus, the author says that when there is something that appears unclear or difficult to understand, one should approve of the wording and abandon exposing oneself to the meaning⁵⁵. One should not expose himself to the trial of

aside from believing in them. The belief in them, without knowledge of their meaning is possible; and, indeed, belief with ignorance is correct. Certainly, Allāh, the Exalted, ordered belief in His angels, His books, and His messengers, and what is revealed to them, even if we do not know from that except the names.'

⁵⁴ Al-Tabarī, *ʿImn al-Bayṭa*, vol. 1, p. 416, under the explanation of Qurʾān: 2: 25

⁵⁵ Ibn Qudāmah mentions in his book in upl al-fiqh, titled *Rawḍah al-Maṣrī*, vol. 1, p. 215, that the ḥyṭ of the Attributes are from the category of the mutashābih (ambiguous/unclear). He states, 'And the correct opinion is that the mutashābih ḥyṭ, that had been revealed concerning the Attributes of Allāh, Glorified is He, are obligatory to believe in and it is prohibited to seek their interpretation, such as statement of Allāh, the Exalted: 'al-Rahmān did it stand over the Throne' (Qurʾān, 20:5), 'Rather, His Yadd are widely outstretched' (Qurʾān, 5:64), 'which I created with My Yadayy.. ' (Qurʾān, 38:75), 'And there will remain the Way of your Lord' (Qurʾān, 55:27), 'Sailing under Our A'yun' (Qurʾān, 54:14) and similar to them. The Salaf, may Allāh have mercy upon them, agreed on affirming them, passing over them as they came, and leaving the interpretation of them. For, indeed Allāh, Glorified is He, has censured the seekers of their interpretation and paired them, in His censuring, with those who seek discord and named them 'the People of Deviation.'

⁵⁶ With the phrase: we are obligated to affirm its wording and to abandon opposing to its meaning; the author states quite clearly that the affirmation of the Attributes of Allāh is upon meaning; and that their meanings are consigned to Allāh. In footnote 52, a quote from

explaining it, and in the case one feels confused about something due to its being unclear, then the right course of action is to believe in the wording, refer the knowledge of its meaning to Allāh, and move on]. **And we refer knowledge thereof** [it must be stressed that this does not mean that the Hanābilah say that these words do not have a meaning. On the contrary, they do have a meaning, although it is not known to us. The idea that 'referring knowledge back to Allāh', or what is commonly understood as relegation and in Arabic is termed *tafwīd*, implies that one is convinced that these words do not have meaning and are like a random collection of letters is erroneous. No scholar ever claimed that this is the intended meaning of *tafwīd*, except for Ibn Taymiyyah, who perhaps misunderstood the madhhab of certain scholars in this regard. He conceived this incorrect understanding and contemporary Salafī scholars unfortunately followed him in this. However, it is not as he states, for the word *Yad* has a meaning; but it is not the literal meaning of the word that is known to men, and the meaning is only known by Allāh.

It is important here to address the difference between the *tafwīd* approach as propagated by the Hanābilah, and the *ta'wīl* approach of the Ashā'irah. These two different approaches to the Attributes of Allāh essentially reject the claim that one should understand and affirm the literal meanings or the actual realities of the specific words denoting Allāh's Attributes. This claim is problematic, for if one sticks to the literal meanings of these words, or their actual realities, it would result in assigning qualities of created beings to Allāh; and this is prohibited. The Hanābilah refute anyone who approves and claims that the literal meanings of these words, in the various *āyāt* and *ahādīth*, are Attributes of Allāh. With this in mind, the crucial question remains: 'what did Allāh then mean by words like *Yad* and *Wajh*'?

One would assume that an answer to such a crucial question is complex and intricate, yet the opposite is true. The position of the Hanābilah concerning these matters is simply that they do not know

Ibn Qudāmah has been mentioned that states that the meanings are unknown, indicating that the meaning should be referred back to Allāh. This all helps to qualify what the author meant whenever he states (throughout his books) that the Attributes are to be considered upon their apparentness (*ẓāhir*). It appears that his intent with this word 'apparent' is the 'apparent wording' and not the 'apparent meaning'

what is meant by them. However, there are certain groups from the Ashʿarīrah and other groups and sects, who state the opposite. They claim to know what Allāh intended with these specific words, and assign meanings to them. Although, the Hanābilah say one cannot know for sure what is meant by these specific words, they do say there is a probability that Allāh meant such-and-such with an *ayah*; thereby understanding the general meaning of the *ayah* as a whole. For instance, regarding the Attribute of *Yad*, Allāh says: *Nay, both His Yada are widely outstretched*²⁶. The Hanābilah believe in this without knowing the meaning of what Allāh intended by the word *Yad*; all the while rejecting the literal meaning of it, and not assigning and specifying a metaphorical meaning. Nonetheless, they understand that the whole *ayah* indicates that Allāh owns everything, to the extent that Allāh can give anyone whatever he wants and needs.

This approach, which is the approach of the Hanābilah, is also one of the opinions found within the madhhab of the Ashʿarīrah. Another famous approach held by the Ashʿarīrah, which is most common amongst them now, is the usage of *taʿwīl tafṣīlī*, i.e. detailed interpretation, with regards to the words denoting the Attributes²⁷, and this is the type of *taʿwīl* that the Hanābilah deem prohibited. In this approach the Ashʿarīrah will say, for example, that by *Yad*, Allāh meant His *Qudrah*²⁸ or His *Iradah*²⁹, depending on the context in which it is said. Thus, they will not confine themselves to the approach of the Hanābilah (i.e. *tafwīd*), and assign a probable meaning of which they admit they are not sure whether it is the right one or not.

²⁶ Qurʾān, 5:64

²⁷ As is clear from the above explanation, it is incorrect to view the Ashʿarīrah as a madhhab that only propagates one specific approach to the Attributes. In its broadest sense there is a clear visible historical dichotomy dividing the Ashʿarī madhhab into an early and later school of thought. Within these two schools there is a clear difference in the approach to the Attributes of Allāh, whereby the later school made *taʿwīl tafṣīlī* (detailed interpretation), i.e. the mainstream approach of their school. Despite this view being mainstream amongst the Ashʿarīrah, there still exists variations in approach to the Attributes within their school, ranging from using only *tafwīd*, to mixing between *tafwīd* and *taʿwīl tafṣīlī* depending on the Attribute in question, to using *taʿwīl tafṣīlī* exclusively. For the sake of brevity, only the two main approaches within the Ashʿarī madhhab are presented. One should keep in mind that this is a very generalised and basic presentation of the Ashʿarī madhhab.

²⁸ *Qudrah* can be translated as 'ability'

²⁹ *Iradah* can be translated as 'will'

Thus, when it comes to the different approaches concerning the Attributes; there are in reality two types of ta'wil. The first type is ta'wil ijmali, i.e. general interpretation, which is the same as tafwid. It is rejecting the literal meaning of an attribute, affirming that the word in that specific context denoting the Attribute has a metaphorical meaning, and stating that the metaphorical meaning is unknown; therefore, one should refrain from specifying or assigning it. Moreover, stating that it has a metaphorical meaning, means on the one hand that it is not merely a meaningless word, while on the other hand it rejects the literal meaning⁶⁰. For, if the literal meaning is rejected, and it is not meaningless (i.e. random letters put together), then it should be a metaphorical meaning because there is no other viable option left. The second type is ta'wil tafsili, and it is rejecting the literal meaning of an attribute, affirming that the word in that specific context denoting the attribute has a metaphorical meaning, which is then further specified (based on its context).⁶¹ This latter type of ta'wil is favoured by a large number of Ash'ari scholars, whilst being strongly prohibited by the Hanābilah to **the One [meaning, Allāh] who stated it** (so, He knows best), **and we entrust it to the one [meaning, the Prophet ﷺ] who transmitted it** (and even he ﷺ did not know the reality of Allāh and His Attributes, and this is because he ﷺ is a part of the creation, and his nature is different from the nature of the Creator. A question may be asked whether the reality of Allāh and His Attributes will eventually be known in paradise; however, the answer to this question is in the negative. There are many things that will eventually be known in paradise, in addition to what we know now, yet, because our 'nature' will not change in paradise (i.e. we still be a part of the creation), there still exists a fundamental difference between the creation and the Creator. For as long as this difference

⁶⁰ the literal meaning would be the meaning as related to created beings, i.e. the meaning of a word as understood in the context of the created world, and this has preceded earlier in the commentary

⁶¹ Ibn Qudāmah wrote a small treatise titled *Dhann al-Ta'wil* in which he brought many narrations from the Salaf, as well as his own arguments, in condemnation of this detailed type of ta'wil. It should not be understood from the title of this booklet, that Ibn Qudāmah condemned ta'wil in general, for he only targeted those groups and individuals who used ta'wil to give a specific meaning to the Attributes.

remains, we will not know and understand the reality of Allāh, and in extension His Attributes as well; for the created cannot encompass the Creator], following the example of those who are firmly grounded in knowledge; those whom Allāh has praised in His manifest Book, with his saying, free of imperfections and exalted is He: *And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: We believe in it* [meaning the clear and unclear āyāt], *the whole of it is from our Lord.*⁶² And Allāh says, while blaming and criticizing those who seek interpretation of the unclear āyāt of His revelation: *As for those in whose hearts there is a deviation, they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking mischief (fitnah) and seeking for its hidden meanings, but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allāh*⁶⁴ [this āyah effectively blocks any hope that one may have with regards to knowing the meanings of the Attributes of Allāh. Furthermore, this also implies that it is prohibited to translate the Attributes of Allāh into other languages. As, when translating, one is essentially interpreting, and therefore attempting to understand the (hidden) meaning. Such a person is blamed and criticized by Allāh, as is mentioned in the above āyah. It should however be noted that translating the Qurān is a matter of scholarly dispute: some stating permissibility, whilst others prohibiting it. However, when it concerns the Attributes of Allāh specifically it should be unequivocally prohibited and no one should oppose this, as Allāh's Attributes are something that we do not understand.

Essentially, there are two different reasons for the prohibition of translation. The prohibition to translate the Qurān in general, because

⁶² Qurān: 3:7

⁶³ Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī (d.795H) stated something similar to Ibn Qudāmāh in *Māḥiyat al-ʿAla*, p. 40-41 'As for what the Prophet ﷺ attributed to his Lord, Mighty and Majestic is He, with what he described Him with, then everything the Prophet ﷺ attributed to his Lord, Mighty and Majestic is He, is true and sincere. It is obligatory to believe in and confirm it, just like what Allāh attributed to himself: accompanied with the negation of making examples for it. Whoever finds difficulty in understanding something of this and finds them confusing should say like those praised by Allāh, the Exalted, the firmly rooted in knowledge, about whom it is reported (in the Qurān) that they say concerning the mutashābih āyāt: 'We believe in it, all of it is from our Lord' just as it was said by the Prophet ﷺ with regards to the Qurān: 'Whatever you are ignorant of, then leave it to its knower' Narrated by Imam Aḥmad, al-Nasā'ī, and other than them.'

⁶⁴ Qurān: 3:7

one is comparing his own way with the way of the Qurān, by giving an interpretation of the meaning of an āyah. When it comes to the Attributes specifically, it is not permitted to translate, because the science of translation does not allow the translation of something without understanding the source language (and that which is translated). Yes, the source language is Arabic but the reality of Allāh and His Attributes are not known in that language, therefore they cannot be translated into another language). Thus, Allāh made the seeking of hidden meanings [for example, by saying *Yad* means His *Qudrah*] a sign of deviation. And He has, in dispraise of it, equated it with seeking after mischief. Then He placed a barrier between them and that which they aspire to, and He cuts off their ambition from what they seek after, by His saying, free of imperfections is He: *but no one knows its hidden meaning except Allah.*⁴⁵

THE WAY OF THE IMĀMS OF THE SALAF CONCERNING ALLĀH'S ATTRIBUTES

قَالَ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ حَنْبَلٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ فِي قَوْلِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَنْزِلُ إِلَى سَمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا»، وَ «إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُرَى فِي الْقِيَامَةِ»: وَمَا أَشْبَهَ هَذِهِ الْأَحَادِيثَ: (نُؤْمِنُ بِهَا وَنُصَدِّقُ بِهَا لَا كَيْفَ وَلَا مَقَى وَلَا تَرَدُّ حَيْثَا مِنْهَا، وَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَا جَاءَ بِهِ الرَّسُولُ حَقٌّ، وَلَا تَرَدُّ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَلَا نَعْبُدُ اللَّهَ بِأَكْثَرِ مَا وَصَفَ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ، بَلَّا حَذَّ وَلَا غَايَةَ، «لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ». وَلَقَوْلُ كَمَا قَالَ، وَنَصِفُهُ بِمَا وَصَفَ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ، لَا تَقْتَدِي ذَلِكَ، وَلَا يَتَلَعَّهُ وَصَفُ الرَّوَاصِفِينَ، نُؤْمِنُ بِالْقُرْآنِ كُلِّهِ مُحْكَمٍ وَمُتَشَابِهٍ، وَلَا نُزِيلُ عَنْهُ صِفَةً مِنْ صِفَاتِهِ لِخِلَافَةِ شُعْنَتِ، وَلَا تَقْتَدِي الْقُرْآنَ وَالْخَدِيثَ، وَلَا نَعْلَمُ كَيْفَ كُنْتُ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِتَضَدِّهِ الرَّسُولِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَتَلَيُّهِ الْقُرْآنَ).

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, may Allāh have mercy on him, said concerning the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: 'Verily, Allāh yanzilu to the heaven of this world (i.e. the lowest heaven)' and 'Verily, Allāh will be seen on the Day of Resurrection' and what is similar to these narrations: 'We believe in it and testify to the truthfulness of it, without explaining 'how' and without 'meaning', nor do we reject anything of it. We know that whatever the Messenger ﷺ came with is the truth; we do not reject anything from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, nor do we describe Allāh with more than what He has described Himself with, without any limit nor any boundaries. *There is nothing equal to Him, and He is al-Samī; al-Baṣīr.*⁶⁶ We say as He said and describe Him with what He described Himself with, nor do we go beyond this. The descriptions of those who attempt to describe Him cannot grasp Him. We believe in all of the Qurān, the muḥkam (clear and decisive) and mutashābih (unclear). We do not reject

⁶⁶ Qurān: 42:11

any of His Attributes due to them appearing repulsive. We do not go beyond the Qurān and the narrations, and we do not know how to understand them, except through the truthfulness of the Messenger ﷺ and the affirmation of the Qurān.'

قال الإمام أبو عبد الله محمد بن إدریس الشافعي رضي الله عنه: (آمَنْتُ بِاللَّهِ وَبِمَا جَاءَ عَنْ اللَّهِ عَلَى مُرَادِ اللَّهِ، وَآمَنْتُ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ وَبِمَا جَاءَ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ عَلَى مُرَادِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ).

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'I believe in Allāh and what has come from Allāh, in accordance with the meaning that Allāh intended. And I believe in the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and what has come from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, in accordance with the meaning that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ intended.'

وعلى هذا دَرَجَ السَّلَفُ وأئمةُ الخلفِ رضي الله عنهم، كُلُّهُمْ مُتَّفِقُونَ عَلَى الْإِقْرَارِ، وَالْإِنْزَارِ وَالْإِثْبَاتِ لِمَا وَرَدَ مِنَ الصِّفَاتِ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةِ رَسُولِهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، مِنْ غَيْرِ تَعَرُّضٍ لِقَائِهِ.

This was the way pursued by Salaf as well as the imāms of the Khalaf (later generations), may Allāh be pleased with them. All of them being in agreement with acknowledgement (iqrār), passing over (imrār), and affirming (ithbāt) what has been mentioned in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ concerning the Attributes, without turning to ta'wīl.

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241 H), may Allāh have mercy on him, said concerning the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: *'Verily, Allāh yanzilu to the heaven of this world (i.e. the lowest heaven)' and 'Verily, Allāh will be seen on the Day of Resurrection'* and what is similar to these narrations: **'We believe in it and testify to the truthfulness of it, without explaining 'how' and without 'meaning'** [this is a famous saying of Imām Aḥmad. He, like the rest of the pious Salaf, did not delve into the details of matters that should just be believed in and not be deeply questioned or discussed. That is to say, Imām Aḥmad would refuse to give any 'meaning' or 'howness' in matters concerning the Attributes. A simple way of explaining the statement of Imām Aḥmad 'no how and no meaning' (lā kayf, wa lā ma'nā) would be that he refused to give the 'howness' because he did not know the 'meaning'. In truth, the statement by Imām Aḥmad is very clear and to say that by 'no meaning' he meant: 'no meaning other than the meaning that is known', then this is ta'wil and the intentional twisting of his words], nor do we reject anything of it. We know that whatever the Messenger ﷺ came with is the truth; we do not reject anything from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, nor do we describe Allāh with more than what He has described Himself with (therefore, if Allāh attributed *Yad* and *Wajh* to Himself, than one ought to believe in it and leave it at that. This is in itself a clear rejection of the Ash'ari method of ta'wil tafsil for Allāh did not state that His *Yad* meant *Qudrah*, otherwise He would have made this clear), without any limit nor any boundaries. *'There is nothing equal to Him, and He is al-Samt; al-Baṣṭ'*⁶⁷ We say as He said and describe Him with what He described Himself with nor do we go beyond this. The descriptions of those who attempt to describe Him cannot grasp Him. We believe in all of the Qurān, the muḥkam (decisive) [meaning, which is clear and self-explanatory] and mutashābih (unclear) [meaning, that which may have more than

⁶⁷ Qurān. 42:11

one possible meaning, like the *āyāt* that mention Attributes]. We do not reject any of His Attributes due to them appearing repulsive [one has to believe in the Attributes as Allāh meant, believing in the meaning that is known to Allāh alone and not known to anyone other than Him]. We do not go beyond the Qurān and the narrations [meaning, one does not seek knowledge and understanding of the Attributes of Allāh elsewhere, for example through *ijtihād*, logic or philosophy], and we do not know how to understand them [meaning, the Attributes], except through the truthfulness of the Messenger ﷺ, and the affirmation of the Qurān.⁶⁶

Imām Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'I believe in Allāh and what has come from Allāh [meaning the Qurān, and relating to this chapter, the Attributes of Allāh in particular], in accordance with the meaning that Allāh intended [thereby rejecting any other interpretation or meaning that may be given to it by way of *ta'wīl tafṣīlī*, distortion (*tahrif*), logical or philosophical deduction, and the like]. And I believe in the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and what has come from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ [meaning, the *shādhith*], in accordance with the meaning that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ intended'⁶⁷ [in these statements there is a clear refutation of those who reject and resort to *ta'wīl tafṣīlī*, comparison, negation (*ta'tīl*) and making examples].

This was the way pursued by Salaf⁶⁸ [meaning, the great imāms

⁶⁶ This saying of Imām Aḥmad. 'We believe in it and testify to the truthfulness of it, without explaining 'how' and without 'meaning...' is narrated from Ḥanbal b. Ishāq (d. 273H). Although well-known, it has some variation, some are longer than others, and some have slightly different wording, yet all carry the same meaning. They are mentioned by Ibn Qudāmah in *Dhamm al-ta'wīl*, no. 33, Qāḍī Abū Ya'īs in *Ibtāl al-ta'wīlāt*, vol. 1, no. 9, and Ibn Baṭṭah al-'Ukbarī (d. 387H) in *al-Ibānah*, vol. 7, no. 50, who reports it via 'Abd Allāh b. Ḥanbal (d. 290H). Instead of Ḥanbal b. Ishāq. Another version of the narration of Ḥanbal b. Ishāq, that slightly differs in wording, is mentioned by al-Lalīkātī (d. 418H) in *Sharḥ Uṣūl Fiqh*, vol. 2, no. 777, stating: *'bīdā kayf, wa lā ḥadd*.

⁶⁷ The same is also mentioned by Ibn Qudāmah in *Dhamm al-Ta'wīl*, no. 89, and in his *fiḥrah Ṣifāt al-Uḥwā*, p. 24.

⁶⁸ In his small treatise *Dhamm al-Ta'wīl*, p. 9, no. 6-8, he says regarding the madhhab of the Salaf: 'The madhhab of the Salaf, Allāh's *Rahmah* be upon them, is belief in the Attributes of Allāh, the Exalted, and His Names, with what He described Himself with in His *āyāt* and His revelation, or (with what he was described with) on the tongue of His messenger, without adding to them, nor detracting from them, nor exceeding them, nor giving them explanation

from amongst them, for 'Salaḥ' is a general and broad term including people from different ranks and standing as was discussed in the general introduction) as well as the imām of the Khalaf (later generations), may Allāh be pleased with them. All of them being in agreement with acknowledgement (iqrār), passing over it (imrār) (meaning, one should accept these narrations and take them at face value, saying *Yad* not *Qudrah*. This also includes sticking and limiting oneself to the use of the Arabic wording. Therefore, one should not translate them to hand, face, essence etc⁷¹. Al-Shirāzī (d. 468H) stated that Imām Aḥmad said concerning the reported Attributes (akhbār al-ṣifāt): 'pass over them, as they come' (amrūhā kamā jā'a)⁷² A man asked Imām Aḥmad concerning the statement: 'Verily, Allāh yanrīlu⁷³ every night to the heaven of this world (i.e. the lowest heaven)', and he (i.e. Imām Aḥmad) said: 'this ḥadīth is authentic (ṣaḥīḥ).' The man asked 'does His *Qudrah* or He himself

or interpretation with that which opposes their apparentness, nor comparing them with the attributes of the creation nor with the features of contingencies (al-muḥdathīn). On the contrary, (they) passed over them, as they came (amrūhā kamā jā'a) and referred knowledge of it (back) to the One who stated them, and its meaning (back) to the one who spoke with it [...] and they knew that the one (i.e. Allāh or the Prophet ﷺ) who spoke with them was truthful, (there being) no doubt in his sincerity; therefore, they believed Him. They did not know the reality of their meaning, thus they remained silent concerning that which they did not know. And the later and the first (from them) took this and cautioned each other with the good of following and stopping where the first of them stopped, and they warned from exceeding them, and straying from their path, and they made their way and doctrine clear for them. We hope that Allāh, the Exalted, will make us from amongst those who imitate them in elucidating what they elucidated, and travel the path they travelled.'

In *Tahrim al-Nazar*, p. 54, he says concerning their way: 'It is the believe in the wording, the ṣūṭ and reports, with the meaning that was intended by Allāh, the Exalted; and silence concerning what we do not know from its meanings; to abandon searching for what we were not burdened with by Allāh, and (to abandon) searching for their explanation and what He did not inform us about from His *Ḥim*, and to follow the way of the firmly-grounded in knowledge; those praised by Allāh in His manifest Book, when He said: 'We believe in it, All [of it] is from our Lord...' (Qur'ān: 3:7).'

⁷¹ The words, hand, face and essence given above are only used as a way of providing examples. They are not to be understood as valid translations for specific Attributes of Allāh.

⁷² And this statement (pass over it, as it comes), has been reported from Imām Aḥmad in a variety of forms. In *Uyūl al-Sunnah*, from Imām Aḥmad himself, p. 8, he states concerning the abridgment of 'the veiling' (ru'yāh) of Allāh, and similar narrations: 'we believe in it as it has come' (ḥu'mun bihi kamā jā'a). Al-Khallāl (d. 311H) reports in *al-Sunnah*, no. 283, by way of Abū Bakr al-Marūdhi (d. 275H) that Imām Aḥmad said a similar thing; as did al-Ajurri (d. 360H) in *al-Sharḥ*, no. 726. Ibn Baṭṭah reports the same in *al-Iḥmāk*, vol. 7, no. 50, and by way of al-Marūdhi, albeit with regards to the abridgment of the Attributes, vol. 7, no. 253.

⁷³ Yanrīlu can be translated as 'He descends'.

yanzilu? Imām Aḥmad responded: 'Woe to you (you are doomed), what is this!' Pass the ḥadīth on as is has come' (i.e. as it has been narrated)⁷⁴, and upon us are the reports of the Salaf and they are an excellent example to follow.⁷⁵ and affirming (ithbāt) what has been mentioned in the Book of Allāh and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ concerning the Attributes, without turning to ta'wīl [whenever ta'wīl is mentioned without specification, it most often refers to ta'wīl tafsīlī. Only when one needs to make a distinction between the two form of ta'wīl, are they made specific from each other].

⁷⁴ Understanding the specific phrases: *kama ja'at*, '*ala pahuri*', '*ala haqiqati*'.

- *Wa al-ḥadīth 'indana 'ala pahuri kama ja'at*: 'and the narration with us are taken upon their apparentness, as they have come'
- *Ma'nawu bihi kama ja'at 'ala pahuri* 'we believe in it as they have come, upon their apparentness.

This means, one accepts and takes the narration(s) as they are, with those wordings, not changing or interpreting anything of them whether one understands their meaning of or not. Therefore, concerning the texts containing Attributes of Allāh, one should just accept their wording, leave them as they are, and consign the meaning back to Allāh. With regards to texts which can be understood, such as those that contains a certain ruling or a description of paradise, an individual may or may not understand their apparent meaning.

There are two possibilities: either one understands the meaning of a text and believes in it, or if the meaning is problematic then one does tafwīd or resorts to iṭḥād in understanding the intended meaning, however, in the case of the Attributes one should be careful and only resort to tafwīd, as speaking about Allāh without knowledge is prohibited.

- '*Ala haqiqat*' upon the literal (meaning)'.

This term *haqiqat* is problematic. When used it should be investigated to see what is meant by it, for it can be used in different ways. It can be used as a term that comes close to the proper way of handling the Attributes of Allāh or, it can also be used in a way as to indicate comparison (*tashbīh*) and anthropomorphization (*tajsim*). In the latter case, it is unacceptable and prohibited because it describes Allāh in the way of His creation. In the former case, when the term 'the literal meaning' (*al-ma'nā al-ḥaqīqī*) is used, it denotes that the meaning of a particular word, which is unknown to us, is also an actual meaning. So, in accordance with this usage there are two actual meanings for the same word, such as in the case with the word 'ayn. One actual meaning of 'ayn is 'an eye', however another is 'a spy'. The word *ḥāḍir* means both 'eyebrow' and 'doorkeeper'. There may also be more than two actual meanings for the same word. Although, this outlook may be incorrect, it nevertheless still results in *tanzīh* (the transcendence) of Allāh and His Attributes. Amongst the Hanābilah who stated that the Attributes are literal (*ḥaqīqīyyah*) was Najm al-Dīn al-Tūft; see, *Ḥalal al-'Uqd fī Bayan Aḥkām al-Mu'āqad* (p. 32-33).

⁷⁵ The specific rendition of this report from Imām Aḥmad is found in *Al-Tabṣirah fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*, p. 146, by al-Shīrāzī. Older works such as *Ḥalal al-Ta'wīl*, no. 260, by Qudṣī Abi Ya'qūb, and *Sharḥ Uṣūl Fiqḥ*, vol. 2, no. 777, by al-Lālikā'ī report a narration, by way of Ḥanbal b. Isḥāq, that shares similarities to what is found in *al-Tabṣirah*.

THE ORDER TO FOLLOW THE SUNNAH AND A WARNING AGAINST INNOVATION

وَقَدْ أَمَرْنَا بِاتِّبَاعِ آثَارِهِمْ وَالْإِخْتِلَاءِ بِسَارِهِمْ، وَخَلَرْنَا الْمُحَدَّثَاتِ، وَأَخِيرْنَا أَنَّهُمَا مِنَ الضَّلَالَاتِ، فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِي، عَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِدِ، وَإِنَّا كُمْ وَمُحَدَّثَاتِ الْأُمُورِ، فَإِنَّ كُلَّ مُحَدَّثَةٍ بِدْعَةٌ، وَكُلُّ بِدْعَةٍ ضَلَالَةٌ».

We have been ordered to follow their way and to be guided by their example. We have been warned of innovations and we have been informed that they are from the things that lead astray. The Prophet ﷺ said: 'upon you is my Sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me, bite on to it with your molar teeth and beware of newly invented matters. Verily, every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a misguidance.'

وقَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: (اتَّبِعُوا وَلَا تَبْتَدِعُوا فَقَدْ كُفِّتُمْ).

'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Follow and do not innovate! For indeed you have been sufficed.'

وقَالَ عُمَرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ كَلَامًا مَعْنَاهُ: (قَدْ حَدَّثَ وَقَفَتِ الْقَوْمُ، فَإِنَّهُمْ عَنْ جِلْمٍ وَقَلُوا، وَبَنَصَرٍ نَالُوا كَلُوا، وَلَهُمْ عَلَى كُفْفِهَا كَانُوا أَقْوَى، وَبِالْفَضْلِ لَوْ كَانَ لَهَا أُخْرَى، فَلَيْنَ قُلْتُمْ: حَدَّثَ تَهْدَهُمْ. فَمَا أَخَذْتَهُ إِلَّا مَنْ خَالَفَ حَدِيثَهُمْ، وَرَجَبَ عَنْ سُنَّتِهِمْ، وَقَدْ وَصَلُوا بِنَهْ مَا يَخْفَى، وَتَكَلَّمُوا بِنَهْ مَا يَخْفَى، فَمَا قَوَّلُهُمْ مُحَسَّرٌ، وَمَا قَوْلُهُمْ مُفَضَّرٌ، لَقَدْ قَصَرَ عَنْهُمْ قَوْمٌ فَجَفَرُوا، وَتَجَاوَزَهُمْ آخَرُونَ فَفَلَّوْا، وَإِنَّهُمْ لِمَا تَنْ ذَلِكَ لَعَلَى هُدَى مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ).

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz, may Allāh be pleased with him, said, with the meaning of: 'Stop where the people have stopped! For indeed, they have stopped upon knowledge. The clear evidences would suffice them and they were the strongest at manifesting it. If there were any additions, they would have done them first. If you say: 'it was introduced after them', then no one has introduced it except the one who opposed their guidance and desires other than their example. For they have certainly described from it what satisfies, and have spoken about it with what suffices. Consequently, whatever is above them is excessiveness, and what is below them is inadequacy. Indeed, some people have fallen short of them and were removed, while others went beyond them and fell into extremism. And they were between these; upon straight guidance.'

وَقَالَ الْإِمَامُ أَبُو عَمْرِو الْأَوْزَاعِيُّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: (عَلَيْكَ يَا نَارِي مَنْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ رَفَعَكَ النَّاسُ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَآرَاءَ الرِّجَالِ وَإِنْ رَخَّرُوهُ لَكَ بِالْقَوْلِ).

Imām Abū 'Amr al-Awza'i, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Adhere to the narrations of those who came before you, even if the people avoid you and reject you. And beware of the opinions of men, even if they beautify them for you with their speech.'

وَقَالَ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَبْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ الْأَدْرِمِيُّ لِرَجُلٍ تَكَلَّمَ بِبِدْعَةٍ وَدَعَا النَّاسَ إِلَيْهَا: (هَلْ عَلِمْتُمْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَبُو بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرُ وَعُثْمَانُ وَعَلِيٌّ أَمْ لَمْ يَعْلَمُوها؟ قَالَ: لَمْ يَعْلَمُوها، قَالَ: فَهَيْهَاتَ لَمْ يَعْلَمْنَهُ هَؤُلَاءِ عَلِمْتُمْ أَنْتَ؟ قَالَ الرَّجُلُ: فَإِنِّي أَقُولُ: قَدْ عَلِمُوها، قَالَ: أَفَوَيْسَعُهُمْ أَنْ لَا يَتَكَلَّمُوا بِهِ وَلَا يَدْعُوا النَّاسَ إِلَيْهِ، أَمْ لَمْ يَسَعَهُمْ؟ قَالَ: بَلْ وَسَعَهُمْ، قَالَ: فَهَيْهَاتَ وَسِعَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَخُلَفَاؤُهُ، لَا يَسْمُكَ أَنْتَ؟ فَأَنْقَطَعَ الرَّجُلُ، فَقَالَ الْخَلِيفَةُ، وَكَانَ حَاضِرًا: لَا وَسِعَ اللَّهُ عَلَى مَنْ لَمْ يَسَعَهُ مَا وَسَعَهُمْ!).

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Adramī said to a man – who was speaking of an innovation and calling people to it: 'Did the Messenger of Allāh, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī have knowledge of this or did they not have knowledge of it?' The man replied: 'They did not have knowledge of it'. He (al-Adramī) said: 'So, something which they had no knowledge of, you know?!' The man responded: 'Then I say that they did know of it'. He (al-Adramī) said: 'Was it sufficient for them that they did not speak about it nor call the people towards it, or was it not sufficient for them?' The man replied: 'Of course it was sufficient for them'. He (al-Adramī): 'So, something which was sufficient for the Messenger of Allāh and his caliphs is not sufficient for you?!' So, the man refrained (from continuing the debate) and the caliph who was present said, 'May Allāh not suffice the one who is not satisfied by what they found sufficient.'

وَمَكَدْنَا مَنْ لَمْ يَسْفَعْهُ مَا وَسَّعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابُهُ وَالتَّابِعِينَ لَهُمْ
بِإِحْسَانٍ، وَالْأَيْمَةَ مِنْ بَغْيِهِمْ، وَالرَّاسِخِينَ فِي الْعِلْمِ، مِنْ تِلَاوَةِ آيَاتِ الصَّفَاتِ وَقِرَاءَةِ
أَخْبَارِهَا، وَإِشْرَافِهَا كَمَا جَاءَتْ، فَلَا وَسْفَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ.

Likewise, May Allāh not suffice whoever is not sufficed by that what sufficed the Messenger, his Companions, their followers who followed them in righteousness, and the imāms that came after them, as well as those firmly grounded in knowledge; concerning recitation of the āyāt of the Attributes, and reading of their reports, and passing over them as they came.

*Commentary: The Order to Follow the Sunnah
and a Warning against Innovation*

We have been ordered to follow their way [i.e. the way of the Prophet ﷺ, his companions and the great imāms from the Salaf who followed them] **and to be guided by their example** [Ibn Hubayrah (d. 560H) said: 'It is not the madhhab of Aḥmad, except for following, categorically, what the Salaf said. He said as they said, and what they

were silent about, he was silent about. To the extent that he rejected to say: "my utterance of the Qurān is created, or uncreated"; because they did not say it. He said concerning āyāt of the Attributes: pass them on, as they came⁷⁶). **We have been warned of innovations and we have been informed that they are from the things that lead astray. The Prophet ﷺ said [in a famous narration]: 'upon you is [to follow] my Sunnah and [to follow] the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me, bite on to it with your molar teeth [being a metaphor for firmly sticking to something without leaving it] and beware of newly invented matters. Verily, every newly invented matter is an innovation, and every innovation is a misguidance.'**⁷⁷

'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd (d. 32H), may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Follow [the Sunnah strictly, without adding to it or omitting from it] and do not innovate! Because you have been sufficed⁷⁸ [with the perfection of the religion in the era before you. So, if they did not speak about a certain thing, then do not speak about it, unless there is a very serious innovation that needs to be refuted. In that case, one is forced to speak about something they did not speak about. Otherwise, one should keep his approach as simple as they did and remain silent⁷⁹].

'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz (d. 101H), may Allāh be pleased with him, said with the meaning of: 'Stop where the people have stopped! For indeed, they have stopped upon knowledge [meaning, they did not stop because they were ignorant, instead they stopped because they were knowledgeable. This affirms that the Salaf were more knowledgeable

⁷⁶ Ibn Rajab, *Diya' al-Dīn Tabaqat al-Hanābilah*, vol. 2, p. 155.

⁷⁷ Imām Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 17145 / Abū Dawūd, no. 4607 / Al-Tirmidhi no. 2676.

⁷⁸ Various successors (tabi'in) reported it from Ibn Mas'ūd. For example, al-Nakha'i, as found in *Kitāb al-Ilm*, no. 54, by al-Khaythamah (d. 234H), and in the *Musnad* of (Abū Mubammad 'Abd Allāh) al-Dakimī (d. 255H), no. 224, it is found as a report from al-Sulamī (d. 75H).

⁷⁹ With regards to remaining silent when it comes to the Attributes, Ibn Qudāmah states in *Tabrīm al-Nazar* (p. 54): 'And if fault is found in [the approach of] silence with respect to explanation, this is a mistake! Because, we do not know its explanation. It is obligatory for whoever does not know anything, to be silent concerning it and it is prohibited for him to speak regarding it. Allāh, Exalted is He, said: 'do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge.' (Qurān: 17:36) and Allāh, Exalted is He, mentioned concerning the prohibitions: 'to say about Allāh what you do not know' (Qurān: 2:169). Also, if this position is found erroneous, then the Prophet ﷺ is erroneous (as well). Indeed, he believed in Allāh and His words, and he did not explain anything of it, nor did he expound on their meanings.'

than the Khalaf⁶⁰). The clear evidences would suffice them and they were the strongest at manifesting it. If there were any additions, they would have done them first [the Salaf refrained from going beyond the Sunnah even though they were more capable of uncovering additional benefits and more deserving of any extra virtue, yet they did not find exceeding the Sunnah to be a good thing. If you say: 'it was introduced after them', then no one has introduced it except the one who opposed their guidance [as their guidance is to not delve into certain matters] and desires other than their example. For they have certainly described from it [i.e. the religion] what satisfies, and have spoken about it [i.e. the religion] with what suffices [for, they passed on everything and did not hold anything back or keep it secret]. Consequently, whatever is above them [meaning, doing or saying more than what they did] is excessiveness, and what is below them [meaning, doing or saying less than what they did] is inadequacy. Indeed, some people have fallen short of them and were removed [from the Sunnah], while others went beyond them and fell into extremism. And they [the companions and the imams of the Salaf] were between these [meaning, between the deviations of excessiveness and inadequacy]

So, from amongst those who have deviated to different degrees are: the Mu'tazilah, the Asha'irah and the Salafiyyah. The Asha'irah as a group are still considered from Ahl al-Sunnah, because from amongst their different approaches towards the Attributes, is an approach similar to that of the Hanbilah. Ultimately, they believe in the tanzih⁶¹ of Allah and therefore

⁶⁰ Ibn Rabb al-Harithi wrote concerning the superiority of the Salaf over the Khalaf, titled *Bayan Fadl 'Im al-Salaf*. On p. 93. He said: 'Whether it is their words in the foundation of the religion (aṣāl al-dīn) or its branches (furu'), in taḥṣīl in asceṣm (ṭubūl, heart-softeners (raq'ah), points of wisdom and exhortation, and other than these of what they spoke of; then whoever travels upon their path, he is indeed guided.'

⁶¹ *Tanzih*: often translated as 'transcendence'. It could be rendered as: to declare something or someone pure and free of something else. Relating to Allah and His Attributes, it is defined as Allah being declared incomparable with anything of His creation. In this regard it is juxtaposed with the concept of *tashbih*; which is to make resemblance between Allah and anything of His creation in general - and in humans in particular.

should be included in Ahl al-Sunnah⁴²; upon straight guidance.⁴³

Imām Abū 'Amr al-Awzā'ī (d. 157H), may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Adhere to the narrations of those who come before you [meaning, the way of the Companions and the ones who followed them], even if the people avoid you and reject you. And beware of the [baseless] opinions of men [meaning, the opinions that are not based on the Sunnah, but instead on personal preferences and desires], even if they beautify them for you with their speech'⁴⁴ [for one may use a beautiful way of speaking or (irrelevant) Qurānic verses or ahādith to support one's argument, and people with a poor mentality or understanding could easily be convinced that it is a good claim or opinion. Therefore, when it comes to the claims and opinion of men one should always check whether the arguments and evidences are relevant to the claim that is being made. If this is done in fiqh, then how about in matters of 'aqidah where one should be more critical towards the claims and opinions of men!]

⁴² Throughout the course of history, the Hanābilah and Ash'irah have always exchanged harsh words and critique, evident from works of the scholars from the early times; and even past the time of Ibn Qudāmah (e.g. the various clashes between Ibn Taymiyyah and his Ash'ari contemporaries which occurred more than hundred years after the death of Ibn Qudāmah). It has already been mentioned that this negative and hostile attitude towards the Ash'irah is evident from the words of Ibn Qudāmah himself throughout his various works.

This attitude however must be contextualised, and thought must be given to the socio-political context at the time in which these scholars lived. Most probably it should be understood that (harsh) criticism from the Hanābilah was directed to certain aspects of the Ash'ari madhhab and/or specific individuals, rather than at the school and its beliefs as a whole. For example, in *Tahrim al-Nafar*, Ibn Qudāmah censures Ibn 'Aqil, and the Ash'ari Jawri is not seeking to critique or refute the ideas of the famous book *Taḥṣīl al-Faṣl* by Ibn al-Jawri but is directed only towards certain specific aspects of the Sufiyyah in general.

In recent times, the hostilities between the Hanābilah and Ash'irah in general decreased, and in the last few centuries, there has been some problematic.

Hanābilah the opinion that the Ash'irah are to be considered amongst the scholars of the details can be found in the 'aqidah works of Ibn al-Qudāmah and Ibn al-Salām.

⁴³ It appears to be the saying of 'Abd al-'Aziz b. 'Abi Salāmah al-Majlisī (d. 164H), as is apparent from *Burhān fi Bayān al-Qurān*, p. 88-89, in which Ibn Qudāmah points to Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz as having said something similar in response to his reply to a question regarding al-qadar, which is reported from Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz concerning

⁴⁴ Reported by al-Ajurri in *Kash al-Shar'ah*, vol. 1, no. 127.

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Adramī⁶⁵ [a scholar from the third century] said to a man⁶⁶ who was speaking of an innovation [which was the innovation of the created nature of the Qurān (fiṭnah khalq al-Qurān)] and calling people to it: 'Did the Messenger of Allāh, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī have knowledge of this [innovation] or did they not have knowledge of it?' The man replied: 'They did not have knowledge of it'. He (al-Adramī) said: 'So, something which they had no knowledge of, you know?!' The man responded: 'Then I say that they did know of it'. He (al-Adramī) said: 'Was it sufficient for them that they did not speak about it nor call the people towards it, or was it not sufficient for them?' [so, the innovator had two options: 1) either to say they had known it but did not inform people about it (i.e. the Messenger, Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Alī kept it a secret), or 2) they told people what they knew. In the latter case, one should ask for proof in the form of a report containing this specific knowledge (i.e. that the Qurān is created) - and such narration does not exist]. The man replied: 'Of course it was sufficient for them'. He (al-Adramī) said: 'So, something which was sufficient for the Messenger of Allāh and his caliphs is not sufficient for you?!'⁶⁷ So, the man refrained (from continuing the debate) and the caliph [Wathīq bi-Allāh (d. 232H), the grandson of the caliph Harūn al-Rashīd (d. 193H)⁶⁸] who was present [as these debates regularly took place in

⁶⁵ It appears that the name is misspelled, as it should be al-Adharmī (as is found in the various reports of the story). Also, some versions of *al-Lum'ah* mention al-Adharmī instead of al-Adramī. See the edition of *al-Lum'ah* by al-Farḥān, titled *Risalah al-Fiqah*, p. 73, footnote 3; in which he compares the differences in the various texts of *al-Lum'ah*.

⁶⁶ He is al-Qaḍī Ibn Abī Du'ād, the chief investigator of the Mu'tazilī inquisition.

⁶⁷ In *Tahrim al-Nasr*, p. 51, Ibn Qudāmah uses a similar line of argumentation to establish that there is no need, and in fact no way, to know the meaning of the Attributes, because it was not known to the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. If he ﷺ knew it, he would have explained it to them, and they to the subsequent generation and so forth. So, he says: 'If explanation was an obligation, the Prophet ﷺ would have clarified it to his Ummah; because it is not permitted to delay an explanation from its time. If it was an obligation for us to do the interpretation, then it would be an obligation for the Prophet ﷺ (i.e. he would have to do the same); because he is an equivalent to us with regards to the rulings. If it was an obligation for him to do so, he would not be deficient in it. And because he ﷺ was keen and careful for his Ummah, he would not hide anything from them that Allāh ordered him with. Indeed, Allāh has said: 'O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message.' (Qurān: 5:67).'

⁶⁸ The story is told through 'al-Muhtadī' (d. 256H), who is the son of al-Wathīq. Ibn al-Jawzī mentions in *Manāzib al-Imām Ahmad*, p. 481, that caliph Wathīq recanted his view that the

the court of the caliph who often attended himself] said, 'May Allāh not suffice the one who is not satisfied by what they [meaning, the Messenger and his companions] found sufficient.'⁹⁹

Likewise, May Allāh not suffice whoever is not sufficed by that what sufficed the Messenger, his Companions, their followers who followed them in righteousness, and the imāms that came after them, as well as those firmly grounded in knowledge; concerning recitation of the āyāt of the Attributes, and reading of their reports [meaning, it is sufficient to just recite these āyāt and ahādith] and passing over them as they came [meaning, leaving these reports just as they were transmitted, without re-interpreting them; and all who were mentioned above found sufficiency in this. Ibn al-Jawzī¹⁰⁰ said, while explaining the ḥadīth: 'Allāh yaḍḥak' at the two men': 'The majority of the Salaf did not do ta'wīl when it came to this (i.e. the reports which mention the Attributes), and they passed over it as it came, and imrār should be taken into consideration in this: (it is) the belief that the Attributes of Allāh do not resemble (or do not have any similarities with) the attributes of the creation. The meaning of al-umrār is: having no knowledge of the intended meaning of it (i.e. the Attributes), accompanied with the belief of tanzīh.'¹⁰¹ Ibn al-Jawzī is accurate in saying 'the majority of the Salaf, as it has been explained earlier that the Salaf are not one homogenous

Qurān was created, and repented. It seems that this debate was the reason for his recantation. Another version of the story is also related by al-Khaṭīb al-Baghḍādī (d. 463H) in *Tarīkh (Baghdād) Madīnah al-Salām*, vol. 11, no. 5142.

⁹⁹ Ibn al-Jawzī relates two versions of the story in *Manāqib al-Imām Ahmad*, p. 475-481, one being short and the other considerably longer. Ibn Qudāmah paraphrases the short version in *al-Lum'ah*. The longer version is reported o.a. by al-Ājurri in *Kitāb al-Shar'ah*, no. 193.

¹⁰⁰ When it comes to statements of Ibn al-Jawzī on issues of 'aḥdāth, and in particular the Attributes of Allāh, the Hanābilāh take a critical approach. To state it in simple terms: Ibn al-Jawzī does not represent the Hanbali madhhab. He has his own opinions, at times he considers some Attributes as the Hanābilāh do, while other times he opts for a different approach (and resorts to ta'wīl taḥsīlī), yet in other instances he does not consider some Attributes to be Attributes at all. At times he himself is confused concerning the issue of the Attributes, and is often confusing to understand. This was all mentioned in the larger works of Hanbali 'aḥdāth, authored by scholars such as: al-Safārtī and Ma'rī al-Karīmī. In all, the scholars of the Hanābilāh have assessed the different statements of Ibn al-Jawzī and taken from them what they appreciated and found in agreement with the Hanbali madhhab, such as the statement mentioned in this ḥashīyah.

¹⁰¹ Yaḍḥak can be translated as 'he laughs'.

¹⁰² Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī*, vol 9, p. 76, no. 2826.

group who all agreed on, and said, the same thing. It is therefore correct to say, 'the majority of the Salaf' instead of claiming *ijmā'* or saying 'they all said such-and-such'.

The exposition of Ibn al-Jawzī concerning *imrār* is beneficial, as *imrār* is usually explained according to its linguistic meaning, i.e. to pass over something without discussing it. In this way it is explained according to the consequences of 'passing over' something. However, Ibn al-Jawzī explains the technical definition, i.e. having no knowledge of the intended meaning of that which one passes over, in this context being the Attributes of Allāh, while being accompanied with the belief of *tanzīh*].

ĀYĀT AND AHĀDĪTH CONCERNING ALLĀH'S ATTRIBUTES

فِيمَا حَاءَ مِنْ آيَاتِ الصُّمَاتِ قَوْلُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «وَيَتَقَى وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ»، وَقَوْلُهُ سُبحَانَهُ
وَتَعَالَى: «إِنَّ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ»، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى إِخْبَارًا عَنْ عِيسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ اللَّهُ قَالَ:
«نَقَلْتُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ»، وَقَوْلُهُ سُبحَانَهُ: «وَيَسَاءَ رَبُّكَ»، وَقَوْلُهُ
تَعَالَى: «مَنْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ»، وَقَوْلُهُ: «رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ»، وَقَوْلُهُ
تَعَالَى: «يُجِيبُهُمْ وَيُجِيبُونَهُ»، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى فِي الْكُفَّارِ: «لَعَنَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ»، وَقَوْلُهُ
تَعَالَى: «اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهُ»، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: «كَرِهَ اللَّهُ اتِّبَاعَهُمْ».

From what has come in the āyāt concerning the Attributes, is the statement of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic: *'And the Wajh of Your Lord, full of Majesty and Honour, will abide forever'*⁹² His saying, free of imperfections and Exalted is He: *'On the contrary, His Yadaḥu are widely outstretched'*⁹³. His statement, Exalted is He, in which He informs us that 'Iṣa b. Maryam, peace be upon him, said: *'You know what is in my inner-self, though I do not know what is in Your Nafs.'*⁹⁴ And His statement, free of imperfections is He: *'And your Lord ja'ā.'*⁹⁵ His statement, Exalted is He: *'Do they then wait for anything other than that Allāh ya'tiya to them'*⁹⁶. And His statement: *'Allāh is raḍiyā with them, and they are pleased with Him.'*⁹⁷ And His statement, Exalted is He: *'He will yuḥibu them, and they will love Him.'*⁹⁸ And His saying, Exalted is He, concerning the disbelievers, *'and the ghaḍab of Allāh is upon them.'*⁹⁹ His saying, Exalted is He: *'That is because they followed what askhaja Allāh.'*¹⁰⁰ And His saying, Exalted is He: *'Allāh kariha their being sent forth.'*¹⁰¹

⁹² Qurān. 55:27

⁹³ Qurān. 5:64

⁹⁴ Qurān. 5:116

⁹⁵ Qurān. 89:22

⁹⁶ Qurān. 2:210

⁹⁷ Qurān. 5:119

⁹⁸ Qurān. 5:54

⁹⁹ Qurān. 48:6

¹⁰⁰ Qurān. 47:28

¹⁰¹ Qurān. 9:46

وَمِنَ السُّنَنِ قَوْلُ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «يَنْزِلُ رَبُّنَا تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى سَمَاوَاتِ الدُّنْيَا»، وَقَوْلُهُ: «يَغْضِبُ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الشَّابِّ لَيْسَتْ لَهُ حِسْوَةٌ»، وَقَوْلُهُ: «يَهْضَمُكَ اللَّهُ إِلَى رَجُلَيْنِ فَكُلُّ أَحَدَهُمَا الْآخَرُ ثُمَّ يَدْخُلَانِ الْجَنَّةَ».

From the Sunnah is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: 'Our Lord, may He be Blessed and Exalted, yanzilu to the lowest heaven every night'. He ﷺ said: 'Your Lord ya'jibu by the youth who does not possess childish manners', and his statement ﷺ: 'Allah yadhak at two men, one of whom kills the other and they both enter Paradise.'

هَذَا وَمَا أَشْبَهَهُ مِمَّا صَحَّ سَنَدُهُ، وَعُدَّتْ رِوَايَتُهُ، تَوْصِيْنٌ بِهِ، وَلَا تَرْكُهُ، وَلَا نَجْعُهُ، وَلَا تَأْكُلُهُ بِتَأْوِيلٍ يُعَالِفُ ظَاهِرَهُ، وَلَا تُفْسِدُهُ بِصِفَاتِ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ، وَلَا بِسِمَاتِ الْمُحَدِّثِينَ، وَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَدِعُهَا وَتَعَالَى لَا شَبِيهَ لَهُ، وَلَا تَطَرُّ: «لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ»، وَكُلُّ مَا تُحْمِلُ فِي الذَّهْنِ أَوْ غَطَرَ بِالتَّأْلِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى بِخِلَافِهِ.

This and others similar to it from those whose chain of narration are authentic, and whose reporters are acceptable; We believe in it, and do not reject it, nor deny it, nor do we (re)interpret it with interpretation which contradicts its obvious meaning. We do not make comparisons with the attributes of creation, nor do we use the names (given) by the innovators. And we know that Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, has no similar or equal: 'There is nothing whatsoever like Him. And He is al-Sami', al-Basir'.¹⁰³ Hence, everything that is imagined by the mind or produced in ones thought, then surely Allah is different from it.

وَمِنَ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: «الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى». وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: «وَأَمِنْتُمْ مِنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ»، وَقَوْلُ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ تَقْدُسُ اسْمُهُ». وَقَالَ لِلْجَارِيَةِ: «أَتَيْنِ اللَّهَ»، قَالَتْ: فِي السَّمَاءِ قَالَ: «أَحْبَبْتُهَا لِأَنَّهَا مُؤْمِنَةٌ». رَوَاهُ مَالِكٌ مِنْ أَنَسٍ وَمُسْلِمٌ وَغَيْرُهُمَا مِنَ الْأَثَرِ. وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

¹⁰³ Qur'an. 42:11

لِحُضْنِي. «كَمْ إِلَهًا تُعْبُدُ؟» قَالَ سَعْدَةُ: حَبْثَةً فِي الْأَرْضِ وَوَجَدْتُ فِي السَّمَاءِ. قَالَ: «مَنْ لِرَبِّكَ وَرَبِّكَ؟» قَالَ: الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ. قَالَ: «فَأَنْتَ السَّعْدَةُ وَاعْتَبِدِ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُكَ دَعْوَتِي»، فَأَسْلَمَ وَعَلَّمَهُ الشَّيْءَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يَقُولَ: «اللَّهُمَّ الْهَمْنِي وَشُدِّي وَبَيِّ شُرِّي نَفْسِي». وَلَمَّا بَقِيَ مِنْ غَلَامَاتِ الشَّيْءِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَصْحَابِهِ فِي الْكُتُبِ الْمُتَقَدِّمَةِ أَنَّهُمْ يَسْتَحْدُونَ بِالْأَرْضِ، وَيَتَعَمَّوْنَ أَنَّ إِلَهُهُمْ فِي السَّمَاءِ. وَرَوَى أَبُو دَاوُدَ فِي مُنْبَاهِ أَنَّ الشَّيْءَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: «إِنْ مَا يَمَن سَمَاءَ إِلَى سَمَاءٍ مَسِيرَةً كَلَّمَا وَكَلَّمَا» - وَذَكَرَ الْغَنِي إِلَى قَوْلِهِ: «وَفَوَّقَ ذَلِكَ الْفَرْشَ وَاللَّهُ مُشَاطَاةٌ فَوْقَ ذَلِكَ».

And from this is His statement, Exalted is He: 'al-Rahmān istawa' over the Throne'²⁰⁴, and His statement, Exalted is He: 'Do you feel secure that He who is fi al-samā'²⁰⁵ And the statement of the Prophet: 'Our Lord is Allah, who is fi al-samā' Sanctified be Your Name.' Also His ﷺ saying to the slave-girl: 'Where is Allāh? She said: 'fi al-samā'' So he said, 'Set her free, for indeed she is a believer.'; as reported by Muslim and Mālik b. Anas and others from the imāms. The Prophet ﷺ said to Husayn (b. Imrān): 'How many gods do you worship? He said: 'seven: six in the earth and one fi al-samā'. He ﷺ said: 'Who is it that you hope in and fear?' He said: 'The One that fi al-samā'' He ﷺ said: 'Then abandon the six and worship the One who fi al-samā', and I will teach you two supplications.' So, he accepted Islām and the Prophet ﷺ taught him to say: 'Oh Allāh, Grant me guidance and save me from the evil of myself.' What was reported in the previously revealed books, concerning the signs of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, is that: they prostrate on the earth while they claim that their god is fi al-samā' Abū Dawūd reported in his Sunan that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Indeed, what is between one level of heaven and (another) level of heaven is a distance of such and such...' He ﷺ continued until he mentioned, 'And above that is the Throne. And Allāh, the One free of all defects, is above that.'

²⁰⁴ Qur'an: 20:5

²⁰⁵ Qur'an: 67:16

فَهَذَا زَمَانُ أَشْنَهُ مِمَّا أَجْمَعَ السَّلَفُ رَحِمَهُمُ اللَّهُ عَلَى تَقْبُلِهِ وَقَوْلِهِ وَلَمْ يَتَعَرَّضُوا لِرَدِّهِ وَلَا تَقْبُلِهِ وَلَا تَنْبِيهِهِ وَلَا تَنْجِيلِهِ.

This and similar to it from what the Salaf, may Allāh have mercy on them, have agreed upon concerning transmission and accepting, and not subjecting it to outright rejection nor distortion, comparison or making example for it.

سُئِلَ الْإِمَامُ مَالِكُ بْنُ أَنَسٍ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ فَقِيلَ: (يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ: «الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْفَرْشِ اسْتَوَى» كَيْفَ اسْتَوَى؟ فَقَالَ: الْأَشْيَاءُ غَيْرُ مَجْهُولٍ، وَالْكَيْفُ غَيْرُ مَقْهُولٍ، وَالْإِنْسَانُ بِوَاجِبِ السُّؤَالِ عَنْهُ بِذَعَةٍ، ثُمَّ أُتِيَ بِالرَّجُلِ فَأُخْرِجَ).

Imām Mālik b. Anas was once questioned, and it was said to him: 'O Abā 'Abd Allāh! The most Merciful *istawa*¹⁰⁶ over the Throne. How is the *istiwa*? So, he responded: 'The *istiwa* is not unknown. The 'how' is incomprehensible. Believing in it is an obligation. And asking concerning it is an innovation.' Then he commanded someone, and he was thrown out.'

Commentary: Āyāt and Ahādīth concerning Allāh's Attributes

(In the following two chapters the author will list various āyāt and ahādīth regarding the Attributes. As previously mentioned on more than one occasion, giving a specific meaning (or explanation) to an Attribute of Allāh is categorically prohibited. For this reason, the commentary will not expound on these āyāt and ahādīth in great detail, sufficing only with mentioning the general meanings of particular āyāt and ahādīth. It is stressed that the general meanings that are given for these āyāt and ahādīth should not to be confused for specific interpretations for the Attributes themselves. Therefore, when it is said that from the āyāh *Hu Yadaḥu*¹⁰⁶ are widely outstretched' it is generally understood to mean that Allāh is generous and can do whatever he wants. This does not mean

¹⁰⁶ *Yadaḥu* can be translated as 'both his hands'

that *His Yadhū* means 'His Generosity'. Giving a general explanation to a whole text differs from giving a specific interpretation or explanation of a specific Attribute that is mentioned in an āyah or hadith.]

From what has come in the āyāt concerning the Attributes, is the statement of Allāh, The Mighty and Majestic: *'And the Wajh of Your Lord, full of Majesty and Honour, will abide forever.'*⁹⁰⁷ [the general meaning being, that Allāh has no end and likewise no beginning]. His saying, free of imperfections and Exalted is He: *'On the contrary, His Yaddū are widely outstretched.'*⁹⁰⁸ [and the general meaning is, that Allāh has the full ability and *Irādāh* to do anything and nothing can stop Him from doing what he wants. He is the most generous]. His statement, Exalted is He, in which He informs us that 'Isa b. Maryam, peace be upon him, said: *You know what is in my inner-self, though I do not know what is in Your Nafs*⁹⁰⁹'.⁹¹⁰ [the general meaning being, Allāh knows everything that a person keeps in his mind, yet we do not know and cannot comprehend the 'Ilm of Allāh]. And His statement, free of imperfections is He: *'And your Lord jā'a'*^{911 912} [with the angels in rows. This āyah is concerned with two things: 1) the coming of the angels on the Day of Judgement, and 2) Allāh will be attendant on that day. One should not ask whether Allāh is with the angels, i.e. being physically with or accompanying them and similar such questions, for these are erroneous things that should not be discussed. On the contrary, one should stick to what Allāh said: *'And your Lord jā'a' and the angels in rows'*. The general meaning being, that we know that Allāh will be attendant on that day, and we may somehow be able to see Him on that day]. His statement, Exalted is He: *'Do they then wait for anything other than that Allāh ya'riya'*⁹¹² *to them'*⁹¹⁴ [this āyah is different from the previous āyāt, because Allāh is criticizing the people who are waiting for Allāh and the angels to come to them; as if Allāh

⁹⁰⁷ Qurān: 55:27

⁹⁰⁸ Qurān: 5:64

⁹⁰⁹ Nafs can be translated as 'inner/self'

⁹¹⁰ Qurān: 5:116

⁹¹¹ Jā'a can be translated as '(he) comes'

⁹¹² Qurān: 89:22

⁹¹³ Ya'riya can be translated as '(he) should come'

⁹¹⁴ Qurān: 2:210

is going to descend from the clouds to them. Allāh rejects this faulty idea and disproves it). And His statement: *'Allāh is radīyā'*¹¹⁵ *with them, and they are pleased with Him*¹¹⁶ [the general meaning being, Allāh will reward those people]. And His statement, Exalted is He: *He will yuḥibū*¹¹⁷ *them, and they will love Him*¹¹⁸ [the general meaning of this āyah is identical to the previous one, i.e. He will reward those people and will grant them paradise. The meaning of ḥubb and its translation as 'love' is problematic as it is something that happens in the heart, and comprises of feelings and emotions]. And His saying, Exalted is He, concerning the disbelievers: *'and the ghaḍab'*¹¹⁹ *of Allāh is upon them*¹²⁰ [ghaḍab is defined as 'the boiling of the heart out of anger', and here this actual meaning does not suit Allāh and it should therefore not be translated as 'anger'. The general understanding of the āyah is that those people mentioned will be punished by Allāh]. His saying, Exalted is He: *That is because they followed what askhaḥa*¹²¹ *Allāh.*¹²² And His saying, Exalted is He: *'Allāh kariha*¹²³ *their being sent forth*¹²⁴ [the general meaning of these āyāt is similar to what is mentioned with regards to the āyah concerning the Ghaḍab of Allāh].

From the Sunnaḥ is the statement of the Prophet ﷺ: *'Our Lord, may He be Blessed and Exalted, yanzilu*¹²⁵ *to the lowest heaven every night.*¹²⁶ [the common English translation is 'He descends to the lowest heavens', and Allāh is the only one who's help is sought! This implies that Allāh is limited and restricted by the boundaries of the lowest heaven, in that it contains Him. If one says 'yes, this is true', then he is at least being honest, however gravely mistaken in his conviction. If one would

¹¹⁵ Radīyā can be translated as '(he) is pleased'.

¹¹⁶ Qurān: 5:119

¹¹⁷ Yuḥibū can be translated as '(he) will love'.

¹¹⁸ Qurān: 5:54

¹¹⁹ Ghaḍab can be translated as 'anger'.

¹²⁰ Qurān: 48:6

¹²¹ Askhaḥa can be translated as '(he) discontented'.

¹²² Qurān: 47:28

¹²³ Kariha can be translated as '(he) disliked'.

¹²⁴ Qurān: 9:46

¹²⁵ Yanzilu can be translated as '(he) descends'.

¹²⁶ Narrated by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 7592 / *al-Bukhārī*, no. 1145 / *Muslim*, no. 758.

from it being very clearly stated that *Nuzūl* should not be understood as 'movement'; it is also an important statement for it contains proof that the usage of '(its) apparentness', does not mean the literal meaning of the word in this context (i.e. in relation to Allāh and His Attributes); for, Ibn al-Bannā¹²⁷ first rejected the literal meaning (i.e. moving from one place to another), and only later stated that 'to carry it upon its apparent' (*ḥamlaha 'alā ḡāhirihi*) is permissible; indicating that when the word 'apparent' (*ḡāhir*) is used, it refers to the wording of the *āyāh* or *ḥadīth* and not the literal meaning of the word itself¹²⁸.

Certainly, both *yanzilu* and *Nuzūl* have meanings, but they are unknown to us, and Allāh knows best! The general meaning of the *āyāh* indicates that Allāh will have more *Raḥmah* with the people at that time, and will reward them more during it, and the last part of this narration actually implies this general understanding¹²⁹. He ﷺ said: '*Your Lord ya'jibū*¹³¹ *by the youth who does not possess childish manners.*'¹³² [and this is one of the cases in which it is not entirely clear what the intended overall meaning should be. It could be said that the general meaning of

¹²⁷ *Nuzūl* can be translated as 'descend'

¹²⁸ Ibn al-Bannā', *Al-Uṣūl al-Mujarradah*, p. 47.

¹²⁹ A similar conclusion based on the words of Ibn Qudāmah was reached in footnote 55.

¹³⁰ The last part being: '*Is there anyone to invoke Me so that I may respond to his invocation? Is there anyone to ask Me, so that I may grant him his request? Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness so that I may forgive him?*'

¹³¹ *Ya'jibū* can be translated as '(he) is amazed'

¹³² This wording is transmitted by al-Qudā'ī in *Musnad al-Shaykh*, vol. 1, no. 576 / Imām Ahmad reported something similar in *al-Musnad*, no. 17371, albeit with a slightly different wording. A different, yet stronger *ḥadīth* which affirms this Attribute, is transmitted by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, no. 488.

the ḥadīth points to Allāh rewarding such a person and elevating him in rank and status. However, there are other general meanings available for it], and his statement ﷺ: *Allāh yadhak at two men, one of whom kills the other and they both enter Paradise.*¹³³

This and others [i.e. other āyāt and aḥādīth] similar to it , from those whose chain of narration is authentic [and give certainty], and whose reporters are acceptable; We believe in it , and do not reject it, nor deny it, nor do we (re)interpret it with interpretation which contradicts its obvious meaning [meaning, which contradicts the obvious meaning of the whole āyah or narration. Thus, Ibn Qudāmāh is talking about understanding the obvious meaning of the whole āyah or narration and not the specific Attribute only. Consequently, twisting the whole meaning of the āyah or ḥadīth to a different meaning is impermissible and unacceptable. Furthermore, the obvious meanings of these narrations are something that most people can understand. Yet, as for the Attributes themselves that are contained in these narrations, then only Allāh knows best what they actually mean]. We do not make comparisons with the attributes of creations, nor do we use the names [meanings, features or traits] (given) by the innovators (and consequently, when the innovators say something concerning Allāh and His Attributes, the Ḥanābilāh do not accept it. For example, calling Allāh (*al-sāniʿāh*), meaning 'the manufacturer'. Although, this innovated term might not be wrong per se, using it and others similar to it is prohibited]. And we know that Allāh, Glorified and Exalted is He, has no similar and equal: *There is nothing whatsoever like Him. And He is al-Sami*¹³⁴ *al-Baṣīr*^{135, 136} Hence, everything that is imagined by the mind or produced in ones thought, then surly Allāh is different from it [so, all the imaginations that the human intellect can produce are inherently nothing like Allah].

¹³³ Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 7326 / al-Bukhārī, no. 2826 / Muslim, no. 1890.

¹³⁴ *Sami* can be translated as 'hearing'

¹³⁵ *Baṣīr* can be translated as 'seeing'

¹³⁶ Qurʾān, 42:11

And from this is His statement, Exalted is He: *'al-Rahmān istawd over the Throne'*¹³⁷ [in a manner that suits His Majesty¹³⁸], and His statement, Exalted is He: *'Do you feel secure that He who fi al-samā'*¹³⁹ [istawd is something that one must believe in, and when it is said that Allāh is over the heavens one should believe it that. One should definitely not believe that Allāh is physically above the heavens or that there is some kind of distance between Him and the heavens, or something to that effect. The general meaning of these āyāt is to show the greatness of Allāh in relation to His creation. For, the 'Arsh is the biggest creation of all created things, yet Allāh is above that]. And the statement of the Prophet: *'Our Lord is Allāh, who is fi al-samā'*! Sanctified be Your Name.¹⁴⁰ [another general meaning one could understand from this is that Allāh is not physically with His creation], also His ﷺ saying to the slave-girl: *'Where is Allāh? She said: fi al-samā'' So he said: Set her free, for indeed she is a believer.*; as reported by Muslim and Mālik b. Anas and others from the imāms¹⁴¹. The Prophet ﷺ said to Ḥussayn

¹³⁷ Qurān. 20:5

¹³⁸ In some 'aḥdāth works by sects who claim and affirm the literal meanings for the Attributes of Allāh, often the addition 'as it suits His Majesty' (or similar phrases) is found, after first having stated that the Attribute is taken on its literal meaning. They use this additional phrase to avoid falling into anthropomorphism. However, this addition is problematic and does not help in attaining the goal they set out to reach, which is avoiding anthropomorphism. On the contrary, it only further complicates the matter for the 'literal meaning' is always something that is related to the physical created world and comprises of created materials. For example, every yad is comprised of flesh and bones and other created materials. When it is said that this meaning is not intended, then this means that the Attribute is in fact not taken on its 'literal meaning' at all, but on a metaphorical one instead. Thus, when one takes an Attribute of Allāh on its literal meaning it implies linking it to, or resembling it with, the creation. Although differences in shared attributes do occur amongst various creatures, such as the difference between a human hand, the hand of an ape, or the hand of another animal, they do share common factors such as, all being created things and using the hand as a 'tool'. Therefore, the addition 'as it suits His Majesty' does not help to avoid anthropomorphism, comparison and making examples. In actuality, it only further complicates the matter. Such a person, in essence, says that Allāh shares in something with the creation, yet His Attribute is different from the creation because it suits His Majesty, and thus is a clear contradiction. Furthermore, Allāh says that 'nothing whatsoever is like Him', and this alone should be enough to divert the Attribute(s) away from their literal meanings. The phrase 'as it suits His Majesty' is on its own not problematic, but only in combination with affirming the literal meaning does it result in a self-contradictory and messy statement.

¹³⁹ Qurān. 67:16

¹⁴⁰ Imām Ahmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 23957 / Abū Dawūd, no. 3892.

¹⁴¹ Muslim, no. 537 / Imām Mālik in *al-Muwatta'*, no. 2251/ and others, like: Imām Ahmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 23762 / Abū Dawūd, no. 930 / Al-Nasā'ī, no. 1218.

(b. 'Imrān): *How many gods do you worship?* He said: *'seven; six in the earth and one fi al-samā'.* He ﷺ said: *'Who is it that you hope in and fear?'* He said: *'The One that is fi al-samā'.*' He ﷺ said: *'Then abandon the six and worship the One who is fi al-samā', and I will teach you two supplications.'* So, he accepted Islām and the Prophet ﷺ taught him to say: *'Oh Allāh, Grant me guidance and save me from the evil of myself.'*¹⁴² What was reported in the previously revealed books, concerning the signs of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, is that: They prostrate on the earth while they claim that their god is *fi al-samā'*.¹⁴³ Abū Dawūd (d. 275H) reported in his *Sunan* that the Prophet ﷺ said: *'Indeed, what is between one level of heaven and (another) level of heaven is a distance of such and such...'* He ﷺ continued until he mentioned: *'And above that is the Throne. And Allāh, the One free of all defects, is above that.'*¹⁴⁴ [yet, He is not physically above that, as He is not confined to place or time].

This and similar to it from what the Salaf, may Allāh have mercy on them, have agreed upon concerning transmission and accepting [of these reports], and not subjecting it to outright rejection nor distorting, comparing or making examples for it [with the characteristics of the creation].

Imām Mālik b. Anas was once questioned, and it was said to him: *'O Abā 'Abd Allāh! The most Merciful istawā over the Throne. How is the istawā?'* So, he (i.e. Imām Mālik) responded: *'The istawā is not unknown [meaning, that the word is known in the Arabic language. When it is spoken in Arabic, an Arabic speaker will understand what is meant by it; and it means to 'ascend']. The 'how' is incomprehensible [meaning, the mind cannot comprehend how this is with regards to Allāh]. Believing in it is an obligation. And asking concerning it [meaning, asking about its kayfiyyah (i.e. how it is), its reality or meaning] is an innovation. Then he commanded someone [to throw out the questioner], and he was thrown out.'*¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Al-Tirmidhī, no. 3483

¹⁴³ It is based on the report that Ibn Qudāmah mentions in *Ihḥās Sifāt al-Uḥwā*, p. 78.

¹⁴⁴ The whole version of the ḥadīth is narrated by Imām Aḥmad in *al-Musnad*, no. 1770 / Abū Dawūd, no. 4723.

¹⁴⁵ This is a famous and authentic saying from Imām Mālik, and it is narrated through various

THE KALĀM OF ALLĀH

ومن صِغَاتِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى أَنَّهُ مُتَكَلِّمٌ بِكَلَامٍ قَدِيمٍ، يَسْمَعُهُ مِنْهُ مَنْ شَاءَ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ. سَمِعَهُ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنْهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ وَاسِطَةٍ، وَسَمِعَهُ جِبْرِيلُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، وَمَنْ أُوذِنَ لَهُ مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَرُؤُسِهِ. وَأَنَّهُ شُبْحَانَهُ يُكَلِّمُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ، وَيُكَلِّمُونَهُ، وَيَأْذِنُ لَهُمْ فَرُوزُونَهُ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: «وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا»، وَقَالَ شُبْحَانَهُ: «يَا مُوسَى إِنِّي اسْتَطَقْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَتِي وَبِكَلَامِي»، وَقَالَ شُبْحَانَهُ: «مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ»، وَقَالَ شُبْحَانَهُ: «وَمَا كَانَ يَنْفَرُ أَنْ يُكَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا وَشَيْءًا أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حِجَابٍ»، وَقَالَ شُبْحَانَهُ: «فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ يَا مُوسَى • إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ»، وَقَالَ شُبْحَانَهُ: «إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِي» وَغَيْرَ جَائِزٍ أَنْ يَقُولَ هَذَا إِلَّا اللَّهُ.

From the Attributes of Allāh is that He is *mutakalim* with *Kalām* that is pre-existent. He causes whomsoever He wills to hear it. Mūsā, peace upon him, heard it from Him without a medium in between. Jibrīl, peace upon him, heard it, as well as whomsoever He permitted from His angels and messengers. He, the One free from all defects, *yukallimu* to the believers in the Hereafter and they will speak to Him. And He will give permission to them, so that they will visit Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: 'and Allāh kallama to Mūsā, with actual speech.'¹⁴⁶ And He, free from imperfections, says: 'He said, O Mūsā, I have chosen you above men by My Messages, and by my Kalām.'¹⁴⁷ And He, free of imperfections, says: 'Allāh kallama to some of them.'¹⁴⁸ Allāh, free of imperfections, says: 'It is not for any human being that Allāh yukallima to him unless by Revelation,

reporters, with assorted wordings. An early source for the exact wording mentioned by Ibn Qudāmāh is *Aḥdāṣ al-Salaf Aḥdāṣ al-Hadīth* by al-Ṣābiʿī (d. 449H), p. 180-181, and even earlier by Abī al-Shaykh al-Aḥbābī (d. 369H) in *Tabaqāt al-Mukaddashin*, vol. 2, p. 214. One of the earliest sources that mentions the report of Imām Mālik is *al-Radd 'alā al-Jaymīyyah*, no. 104, by ʿUthmān b. Saʿīd al-Dārīmī (d. 280H); with a slight difference in the order of phrases.

¹⁴⁶ Qurʾān: 4:164

¹⁴⁷ Qurʾān: 7:144

¹⁴⁸ Qurʾān: 2:253

or from behind a veil.¹⁴⁹ And Allāh, free of imperfections, says: 'And when he came to it, he was called by name: O Musa, Verily, I am your Lord...'¹⁵⁰ Allāh, free of imperfections, also says: 'Verily, I am Allāh, None has the right to be worshipped except I, so worship me, and establish the Prayer for My remembrance.'¹⁵¹ It is not permissible for anyone to say this is other than Allāh.

وَقَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: إِذَا تَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ بِالْوَحْيِ سَمِعَ صَوْتُهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ، وَيُرَوَّى ذَلِكَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. وَيُرَوَّى عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَنَسٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: «يُخْشَرُ اللَّهُ الْخَلَائِقَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عُرَاءَ خُفَاةٍ بَيْنَهُمَا قِتَادُهُمْ بِصَوْتٍ يَسْمَعُهُ مَنْ بَعْدَ، كَمَا يَسْمَعُهُ مَنْ قَرَّبَ: أَنَا الْمَلِكُ، أَنَا الدُّنْيَانُ» رَوَاهُ الْأَيْمَنُ وَاشْتَقَّهَ بِهِ الْبُخَارِيُّ.

'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd said, 'When Allāh takallama through revelation, the inhabitants of the Heavens hear His Ṣawt'. He narrated this from the Prophet ﷺ. Also, 'Abd Allāh b. Anīs reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'Allāh will gather the creatures on the Day of Judgement, naked, barefooted, uncircumcised having nothing with them. He will call to them with a Ṣawt, that those who are far as well as those who are near will hear, (saying:) 'I am al-Malik, I am al-Dayyān.' As narrated by the imāms, and quoted by al-Bukhārī.

وَقَالَ بَعْضُ الْأَوَّلَاءِ أَنَّ مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَمَّا رَأَى النَّارَ فَهَاتَتْهُ، وَفُورَ مِنْهَا، فَقَادَهُ رَبُّهُ: يَا مُوسَى! فَأَجَابَ سَرِعًا انْشِطَاثًا بِالصَّوْتِ، فَقَالَ: لَيْتَكَ لَيْتَكَ! أَسْمَعُ صَوْتَكَ وَلَا أَرَى مَكَانَكَ، فَأَنْزَلَ أَنْتَ؟ فَقَالَ: أَنَا فَوْقَكَ، وَأَمَّا أَنْتَ، وَهَنْ يَمِينِكَ، وَهَنْ شِمَالِكَ، فَخَلِمَ أَنْ هَبِ الصَّفَا لَا تَنْتَبِهِ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى. قَالَ: كَذَلِكَ أَنْتَ يَا إِلَهِي! أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَنْتَ أَسْمَعُ أَمْ كَلَامَ رَسُولِكَ؟ قَالَ: بَلْ كَلَامِي يَا مُوسَى.

¹⁴⁹ Qurān: 42:51

¹⁵⁰ Qurān: 20:11-12

¹⁵¹ Qurān: 20:14

In some narrations, it mentions that: 'one night Mūsā, peace upon him, saw the fire and it overthrew him, so he became frightened by it. Then his Lord called to him, 'O Mūsā!' So, he responded quickly, being familiar with the Ṣawt 'Here I am to serve you! Here I am! I hear Your Ṣawt but I do not see your place. Where are you?' He said, 'I am above you, and I am in front of you, on your left and on your right.' So, he realized that this attribute did not befit anyone except Allāh. He then said, 'You are just as You say, my Lord. Do I hear Your Kalām or the speech of one of Your Messengers?' He said, 'No, rather My Kalām, O Mūsā.'

Commentary: The Kalām of Allāh

From the Attributes of Allāh is that He is *mutakalīm*¹⁵² with *Kalām*¹⁵³ that is pre-existent. He causes whomsoever He wills to hear it [yet, this does not mean that when one hears something that Allāh said, that He has just said it at that particular time. On the contrary, it means that He causes whoever He wills from amongst His creation to hear His Kalām]. Mūsā, peace upon him, heard it from Him without a medium in between. Jibrīl, peace upon him, heard it, as well as whomsoever He permitted from His angels and messengers [here the author establishes two important points. The first being that his Kalām is pre-existent, it has no beginning, just as the rest of His Attributes as the governing principle¹⁵⁴ dictates that: 'Allāh has no beginning, therefore His Attributes have no beginning'. The second being that His Kalām can be heard by whoever He chooses, without the need of a medium]. He, the One free from all defects, *yuhakkim*¹⁵⁵ to the believers in the Hereafter [meaning, that they will hear his Kalām. It does not mean that He initiates new Kalām at that particular moment in time] and they will speak to Him. And He will give permission to them, so that they will visit Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says:

¹⁵² Mutakalīm can be translated as 'speaking'.

¹⁵³ Kalām can be translated as 'speech'.

¹⁵⁴ It was mentioned previously that attributes are related to the essence of something that they are attributed to.

¹⁵⁵ *Kalīm* can be translated as 'he will speak'.

'and Allāh kallama¹⁵⁶ to Mūsā, with actual speech.¹⁵⁷ [meaning that it is actual kalām (kalām ḥaqīqī) which can be heard by His creation. This is contrary to the view that what people hear is the creation of speech (in something else created) brought about by Allāh. How this actual Kalām happens, and what the reality of it is or even how it sounds, is unknown and is consigned to the knowledge of Allāh. There is however an accepted narration in which there is mention of a sound resembling a chain being dragged across a rock.¹⁵⁸ Yet, to understand from this that His Kalām makes this sound, or that these chains are His Ṣawt¹⁵⁹ is incorrect. It is merely understood from the narration that this sound is what the angels hear, and it is something that accompanies His actual Kalām] ***And He, free from imperfections, says: He said, O Mūsā, I have chosen you above men by My Messages, and by my Kalām.¹⁶⁰*** [and this shows that His Kalām is actually audible, for what would be the advantage of Mūsā hearing the Kalām of Allāh, if it was just something that He created in a tree or in something else? If it was not His actual Kalām, there would be no difference between prophet Mūsā and a person who recites Qurān and through this act hears some of the Kalām of Allāh; as in both cases it would be related to something created, i.e. hearing His Kalām through the created sounds of the reciter, or hearing His Kalām through it being created in a tree. Therefore, the advantage of Mūsā over other men, was by means of him hearing and being directly addressed by His actual Kalām. This does not mean he was the only one who was preferred in this way, for the Prophet ﷺ did hear the Kalām of Allāh directly on particular occasions, and he ﷺ saw Allāh according to the relied upon position of the Ḥanbalī madhhab] ***And He, free of imperfections, says: 'Allāh kallama to some of them.'¹⁶¹ Allāh, free of imperfections, says: It is not for any human bring that Allāh yukallima to him unless by Revelation, or from behind a veil.¹⁶² And Allāh, free of imperfections,***

¹⁵⁶ Kallama can be translated as '(he) spoke'.

¹⁵⁷ Qurān: 4:164

¹⁵⁸ Abū Dawūd in his Sunan, no. 4738.

¹⁵⁹ Ṣawt can be translated as 'voice' or 'sound' depending on the context.

¹⁶⁰ Qurān: 7:144

¹⁶¹ Qurān: 2:253

¹⁶² Qurān: 42:51

the case, and it is in contradiction to what is mentioned in the Qurān, regarding it being in 'clear Arabic' ('arabiyyin mubin). Therefore, this 'clanking' sound is not His *Ṣawt*).¹⁶³ He narrated this from the Prophet ﷺ. Also, 'Abd Allāh b. Anīs reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: *Allāh will gather the creatures on the Day of Judgement, naked, barefooted, uncircumcised having nothing with them. He will call to them with a Ṣawt, that those who are far as well as those who are near will hear, (saying:) I am al-Mālik¹⁶⁴, I am al-Dayyān¹⁶⁵.*¹⁶⁶ As narrated by the imāms¹⁶⁶, and quoted by al-Bukhārī.¹⁷⁰ [From these aḥādīth one understands that Allāh has the Attribute of Kalām. It also points to

¹⁶³ Qur'ān: 20:11-12

¹⁶⁴ Qur'ān: 20:14

¹⁶⁵ 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad in his *Kitāb al-Sunnah*, no. 536, and this particular wording is also transmitted by Abū Bakr al-Najād (d. 348H) in *al-Radd 'alā man Yaḥd al-Qur'ān Maḥḥaq*, no. 5 / al-Sijzi (d. 444H) in *Rasālah ilā Abi Zaid*, p. 166. Other versions of this narration, with slightly different wordings, i.e. not containing the word 'His Ṣawt', are transmitted o.a. by Abū Dawūd in his *Sunan*, no. 4738 / al-Darīmi in *al-Radd 'alā al-Jahmiyyah*, no. 308 / and Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311H) in *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, p. 350-357.

¹⁶⁶ *Malik* can be translated as 'king'

¹⁶⁷ *Dayyān* can be translated as 'recompenser'.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibn al-Aḥmad* in his *Muḥammad*, no. 16042.

¹⁶⁹ Amongst others: Ibn Abū 'Āsim (d. 287H) in *Kitāb al-Sunnah*, no. 514 / and al-Hākim (d. 405H) in *al-Mustadrak*, no. 8778; with a slightly different wording.

¹⁷⁰ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, bk. 97, ch. 32.

another Attribute, namely His *Şawt*, and both are related to each other as the *Kalām* of Allāh is with a *Şawt* (*Kalām Allāh bi-Şawt*). It is also understood from this that His *Kalām* is actual *Kalām* and that He has a *Şawt* that can be heard, although how it actually is or how one may hear it is unknown).

In some narrations, it mentions that [and this particular wording used by the author shows that the narration following it is weak¹⁷¹, although it does not harm to cite such a narration to support the main idea concerning the *Kalām*, i.e. it being actual *Kalām* with a *Şawt* that can be heard. Still, it is redundant to do so because stronger evidences have already been presented]: *'one night Mūsā, peace upon him, saw the fire and it overthrew him, so he became frightened by it. Then his Lord called to him, 'O Mūsā!' So, he responded quickly, being familiar with the Şawt, 'Here I am to serve you! Here I am! I hear Your Şawt but I do not see your place. Where are you?' He said, 'I am above you, and I am in front of you, on your left and on your right.' So, he realized that this attribute did not befit anyone except Allāh. He [i.e. Mūsā] then said, 'You are just as You say, my Lord. Do I hear Your Kalām or the speech of one of Your Messenger [i.e. angels]? He said, 'No, rather My Kalām, O Mūsā.'*¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ At certain places in *al-Lum'ah*, and also in other books of 'aqlidāh in general, the author cites weak (*da'if*) ahādith to support or illustrate a particular issue. The citing of a weak hadith does not necessarily mean that the specific issues is baseless if the particular weak hadith was non-existent. In the majority of instances, when a weak hadith is used it means that the meaning it conveys is at least correct. Therefore, these weak hadith should not be dismissed, categorically, because they can convey correct meanings. It is also possible that a stronger hadith was transmitted but not mentioned by the author (due to various reasons).

¹⁷² Imām Ahmad in *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, no. 342, p. 54-56, narrates the complete story about prophet Mūsā, and it is from the *Isra'iliyyāt*. Ibn Qudāmāh quotes only a small part of it; as did al-Sijal in *Risalah ila Ahl Zabid*, p. 163.

THE QURĀN IS THE KALĀM OF ALLĀH

وَمِنْ كَلَامِ اللَّهِ سُحُوحَاتُهُ: الْقُرْآنُ الْعَظِيمُ، وَهُوَ كِتَابُ اللَّهِ الْمُبِينُ، وَخُبْرُهُ النَّصِيحُ، وَمِرَاثُهُ الْمُسْتَقِيمُ، وَتَنْبِيلُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ، عَلَى قَلْبِ سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ يُبَيِّنُ غَرِيْبَ مُبِينٍ، مُنْزَلٌ غَيْرٌ مُتَغَلَّبٍ، مِنْهُ هَدًى وَلِئِهِ يُعْرَضُ.

From the Kalām of Allāh, is the Glorious Qurān. It is the clear Book of Allāh and His firm Rope. It is His Straight Path and the revelation of the Lord of the universe. The most honourable spirit descended with it to the heart of the best of the Messengers, in a clear Arabic language. It was revealed and not created. From Him it began and to Him it will return.

وَهُوَ سُورٌ مُخَكَّمَاتٌ، وَأَيَّاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ، وَحُرُوفٌ وَكَلِمَاتٌ مِنْ قُرْآنِهِ فَأَعَزَّهُ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ عَشْرٌ حَسَنَاتٍ. لَهُ أَوَّلٌ وَآخِرٌ، وَأَجْوَادٌ وَأَتِمَامٌ، مَقْلُوبٌ بِالْأَلِفِ مَحْضُوطٌ فِي الصُّدُورِ، مَسْمُوعٌ بِالْأَذَانِ، مَكْتُوبٌ فِي الْمَصَاحِفِ.

It consists of decisive sūrahs, clear āyāt, letters and words. Whoever recites it and does so properly, will have ten good deeds for every letter he recites. It has a beginning and an end, and it consists of specific sections and parts. It is that which is recited by the tongues, memorized in the hearts, listened to by the ears and written in the maṣāḥif.

فِيهِ مُخَكَّمٌ وَمُتَشَابِهٌ، وَنَاسِخٌ وَمَنْسُوخٌ، وَمَحَاسِنٌ وَمَعَامٍ، وَأَمْرٌ وَنَهْيٌ «لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْتَابِلُ مِنْ تَبٍ يَذَّبُ وَلَا مِنْ غُلُوبِهِ تَنْهَالُ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَبِيبٍ»، «قُلْ لِّئِنْ احْتَمَبْتَ الْإِنْسَ وَالْجِنَّ عَلَى أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَفْعَلُوهُ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِعَصْفِهِ لِمَبْعَثُ ظُومِرٌ».

In it are āyāt which are muḥkam (clear) and āyāt which are mutashābih (ambiguous), that which is abrogating and that which is abrogated, that which is specific and that which is general and that which contains

obligation and that which contains prohibition. 'Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or behind. It is sent down by al-Hakim, al-Hamid.'¹⁷³ 'Say: If mankind and jinn were to gather together to produce the likes of this Qur'an, they could not produce the likes thereof, even if they helped one another.'¹⁷⁴

وَهُوَ هَذَا الْكِتَابُ الْقُرْآنُ الَّذِي قَالَ فِيهِ الدِّينَ كَفَرُوا: «لَيْ تُؤْمِنَ بِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ»، وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: «إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ»، فَقَالَ اللَّهُ سُبحَانَهُ: «سَأُصْلِيهِ سَقَرَ»، وَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: هُوَ شِعْرٌ. فَقَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: «وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَقُرْآنٌ مُبِينٌ» فَلَمَّا نَفَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ شِعْرٌ وَأَلْبَنَتْ قُرْآنًا لَمْ يَبْقَ شَيْءٌ لِدَيْ لُبِّ فِي أَنْ الْقُرْآنَ هُوَ هَذَا الْكِتَابُ الْقُرْآنُ الَّذِي هُوَ كَلِمَاتٌ، وَخُرُوفٌ وَأَيَاتٌ؛ لِأَنَّ مَا لَيْسَ كَذَلِكَ لَا يَقُولُ أَحَدٌ: إِنَّهُ شِعْرٌ.

This is the Arabic Book of which the disbelievers said concerning it: 'We will never believe in this Qur'an.'¹⁷⁵ And some of them said: 'This is nothing but the word of a human being.'¹⁷⁶ So, Allāh, free from imperfections, said: 'I will cast him into the Hellfire.'¹⁷⁷ Some of them said that it was poetry, so, Allāh, Exalted is he, said: 'And We have not taught him poetry, nor is it suitable for him. This is only a reminder and a plain Qur'an.'¹⁷⁸ Thus, when Allāh denies that it is poetry and confirms that it is Qur'an, there should not remain any doubt for the one possessing intellect, that the Qur'an is that Arabic Book which is composed of words, letters and āyāt. This is because if it were not so, then they would not have claimed it was poetry.

وَقَالَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَى عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ»، وَلَا يَجُوزُ أَنْ يَتَخَدَّاهُمْ بِالْإِنْيَانِ بِجَهْلِ مَا لَا يُدْرَى مَا هُوَ وَلَا يُفْقَلُ.

¹⁷³ Qur'an. 41:42

¹⁷⁴ Qur'an. 17:88

¹⁷⁵ Qur'an. 43:31

¹⁷⁶ Qur'an. 74:25

¹⁷⁷ Qur'an. 74:26

¹⁷⁸ Qur'an. 36:69

Allāh, The Mighty and The Sublime, says: 'And if you are in doubt concerning what We have sent down to Our Slave, then produce a fārah like thereof and call your witnesses besides Allāh.'¹⁷⁹ It is not right for Him to challenge them with producing something that they neither know nor understand.

وقال تعالى: «وَإِذَا تَتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٌ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا إِنِّي وَكَأَنِّي أَبْهَرْتُ هَذَا أَوْ بَدَّلَهُ فَلَمْ تَأْتِكُمْ لِي أَنْ أَبْدَلَهُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ نَفْسِي»، فَأَتَتْهُ أَنَّ الْقُرْآنَ هُوَ الْآيَاتِ الَّتِي تَتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ. وقال تعالى: «بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُورِ الَّذِينَ أُولُوا الْعِلْمَ».

Allāh, Exalted is He, says: 'And when Our clear āyāt are recited unto them, those who not hope for the meeting with Us, say: Bring us a Qurān other than this, or change it.' Say: It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I only follow that which is revealed unto me.'¹⁸⁰ This confirmed that the Qurān consists of āyāt, which are recited unto them. And He, Exalted is He, says: 'No, but they are clear āyāt that are preserved in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge.'¹⁸¹

وقال تعالى: «إِنَّهُ لَقُرْآنٌ كَرِيمٌ • فِي كِتَابٍ مَكْنُونٍ • لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ»، يَهْدُ أَنْ لَقَسَمَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

And He, the Exalted, says after having sworn upon it: That is indeed an honourable Qurān. In a Book well-guarded, which none can touch, except the purified.'¹⁸²

وقال تعالى: «كَهَيِّئَةٍ»، «حَمَّ • حَتَقَ»، «وَالْفَتْحُ نَشْأًا وَعِشْرِينَ سُورَةً بِالْعُرُوبِ الْمُقَطَّعَةِ». وقال النبي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَأَعْرَبَهُ فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ مِنْهُ عَشْرُ حَسَنَاتٍ، وَمَنْ قَرَأَهُ وَلَمْ يَرْبِ بِهِ فَلَهُ بِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ حَسَنَةٌ»، حَدَّثَ صَحِيحٌ.

¹⁷⁹ Qurān: 2:23

¹⁸⁰ Qurān: 10:15

¹⁸¹ Qurān: 29:49

¹⁸² Qurān: 56:77-79

وقال عليه الصلاة والسلام: «(اتقوا القرآن قبل أن يأتي قوم يمسحون حروفه وإثباته منهم لا يحاورونهم يتمتعون أجره ولا يتأجلونه)». وقال أبو بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما: (اغرب القرآن أحب إلينا من حفظ بعض حروفه). وقال علي رضي الله عنه: (من كفر بخلاف منه فقد كفر به كله).

And Allāh, Exalted is He, says: 'Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Šād.'¹⁴³ And: 'Ha Mīm 'Ayn Sin Qaf.'¹⁴⁴ He begins twenty-nine šūrahs of the Qurān with individually separated letters. The Prophet ﷺ said in an authentic narration, 'Whoever recites the Qurān and recites it properly, there will be ten good deeds for him, for every letter from it. And whoever recites the Qurān and he recites it improperly, there will be one good deed for him for every letter,' and this is an authentic ḥadīth. And he ﷺ said: 'Read the Qurān before there comes to you a people who will straighten its letters like an arrow is straightened; yet, it will not pass their throats. Their reward will be hastened and not postponed.' Abū Bakr and 'Umar said: 'To make 'irāb of the Qurān is more beloved to us than to memorize some of its letters.' 'Alī said: 'Whoever disbelieves in one letter from it; then he has disbelieved in all of it.'

والتق المسلمون على عدد سور القرآن وآياته وكلماته وحروفه. ولا خلاف بين المسلمين في أن من جحد من القرآن سورة أو آية أو كلمة أو حرفاً متفقاً على أنه كافر، وفي هذا حجة قاطعة على أنه حروف.

The Muslims have agreed on the number of šūrahs, āyāt, words and letters of the Qurān. There is no disagreement amongst the Muslims concerning the disbelief of the one who denies a šūrah, āyah, word or letter from the Qurān, which has been agreed upon. In conclusion, this is conclusive proof that the Qurān consists of letters.

¹⁴³ Qurān: 19-1

¹⁴⁴ Qurān: 41-1

From the *Kalām* of Allāh, is the Glorious Qurān [as mentioned in the previous section, Allāh is attributed with *Kalām*, and as is the case with Him and all of His Attributes, it follows that we do not have a full realisation of His *Kalām*. There are two important issues related to His *Kalām*. Firstly, the totality of Allāh's *Kalām* is pre-existent and someone being able to hear it depends upon His Will. Secondly, although we do not know everything about His *Kalām*, we can know for sure that the Qurān is from His *Kalām*; as mentioned by the author]. It is the clear Book of Allāh and His firm Rope. It is His Straight Path and the revelation of the Lord of the universe. The most honourable spirit [i.e. Jibril] descended with it to the heart of the best of the Messengers [and creatures], in a clear Arabic language [therefore, all the general meanings of the Qurān are known]. It was revealed and not created [thus, Allāh did not create the Qurān, but *kallama* with it, and He does not need a tool to be able to speak]. From Him it began and to Him it will return [and the author is referring to an event that will happen before the Day of Judgement. At some point, the Qurān will be taken from the hearts of people and the *maṣāḥif*¹⁸⁵ and will return back to Allāh such that all the *maṣāḥif* will be left blank and no one will remember it by heart¹⁸⁶].

It consists of decisive *ṣūrahs*, clear *āyāt*, letters and words [meaning, these *ṣūrahs*, *āyāt* and words are understandable, some in a specific way and some only in general. The words and letters are

¹⁸⁵ The *Mushaf* refers to the compiled written Qurān.

¹⁸⁶ A narration with this meaning has been transmitted by al-Dārimī in his *Sunan*, no. 3661, 3663: "Recite the Qurān much before it is taken away." They said, "These *maṣāḥif* will be taken away! What about that which is [memorized] in men's hearts?" He said, "Something will come and take it one night, and in the morning, they will wake up without it. They will forget the phrase 'In the name of Allāh' and they will start to recite the sayings and poetry of the *Jahiliyyah*. That is when the Word will be fulfilled against them."

A similar narration has been transmitted by al-Tabarānī in *Mu'jam al-Kabir*, no. 8698: "This Qurān will most certainly be taken away from amongst you. He was asked: 'Oh, Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān, how will it be taken away when it is so firmly rooted in our hearts and it is written in our *maṣāḥif*?' He said: 'Something will come to it at night, then there will be nothing left of it in people's hearts or in the *mushaf*, and the next morning the people will be like animals.' Then he recited the *āyah*. 'And if We willed, We could surely, take away that which We have revealed to you. Then you would find no protector against Us in that respect'."

known in the Arabic language, and can they be looked up for example in a dictionary]. **Whoever recites it and does so properly** [meaning, with 'irāb], **will have ten good deeds for every letter he recites**¹⁸⁷ [understanding what one says is not a condition for receiving these good deeds as is apparent from the narrations. Merely reciting properly, without understanding, will reward one these good deeds. Something to this effect has been mentioned by Imām Aḥmad¹⁸⁸]. **It has a beginning and an end, and it consists of specific sections and parts.** **It is that which is recited by the tongues** [thus, the Qurān that Allāh takallama with is the same Qurān that is recited by people. However, this does not mean that it can be said that the pronunciation of someone who recites it is the same as when Allāh takallama with it, as people pronounce and their pronunciation of it is created, and Allāh does not pronounce like this. Yet, the words people recite are from the Kalām of Allāh which is one of His Attributes], **memorized in the hearts, listened to by the ears and written in the maṣṣāḥif.**

In it are āyāt which are muḥkam (clear) and āyāt which are mutashābih (ambiguous), that which is abrogating and that which is abrogated, that which is specific and that which is general and that which contains obligation and that which contains prohibition. Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or behind. It is sent down by al-Ḥakīm¹⁸⁹, al-Ḥamid¹⁹⁰.¹⁹¹ Say: If mankind and jinn were to gather together to produce the likes of this Qurān, they could not produce the likes thereof, even if they helped one another.¹⁹² [and this is the real miracle of the Qurān].

¹⁸⁷ Al-Tirmidhī in his Sunan, no. 2910: 'Whoever recites a letter from Allāh's Book, then he receives the reward from it, and the reward of ten the like of it. I do not say that Alif Lam Mim is a letter, but Alif is a letter, Lam is a letter and Mim is a letter.'

¹⁸⁸ Ibn al-Jawzī in *Menāqib al-Imām Aḥmad*, p. 583-584, and the source is al-Qhailī in *al-Majlis al-Ashraf*, no. 50: Abū Allāh ḥ. Aḥmad said: 'I heard my father saying: 'I saw the Lord of Might, Mighty and Majestic is He, in my sleep. I said 'O Lord, what is the best thing that those who wish to get closer to you can do?' He said: 'To recite my word (Qurān)'. I said: 'O Lord, with or without understanding it?' He said: 'Yes, with or without understanding.'

¹⁸⁹ Ḥakīm can be translated as 'wise.'

¹⁹⁰ Ḥamid can be translated as 'one who is praised a lot'

¹⁹¹ Qurān, 41:42

¹⁹² Qurān: 17:88

This is the Arabic Book of which the disbelievers said concerning it; *We will never believe in this Qurān.*¹⁹³ And some of them said: *This is nothing but the word of a human being.*¹⁹⁴ So, Allāh, free from imperfections, said: I will cast him into the Hellfire.¹⁹⁵ Some of them said that it was poetry, so, Allāh, Exalted is He, said: *And We have not taught him* [i.e. Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ] *poetry, nor it is suitable for him. This is only a reminder and a plain Qurān.*¹⁹⁶ Thus, when Allāh denies that it is poetry and confirms that it is Qurān, there should not remain any doubt for the one possessing intellect, that the Qurān is that Arabic Book which is composed of words, letters, and āyāt. This is because if it were not so, then they [i.e. the disbelievers] would not have claimed it was poetry [if it was in fact poetry, or something created, then the disbelievers would not have had a problem with it. They only claimed it was such because they objected to it being from Allāh, as a part of His Kalam. Consequently, Allāh refutes them by saying it is in fact Qurān from Allāh and not something created such as poetry].

Allāh, The Mighty and The Sublime says; *And if you* [i.e. the disbelievers] *are in doubt concerning what We have sent down to Our Slave* [i.e. Muḥammad ﷺ], *then produce a ṣaḥāh the like thereof and call your witnesses besides Allāh.*¹⁹⁷ [indicating the real miracle of the Qurān is the inability to produce something or even a small part like it, which is understood and known to people] *It is not right for Him to challenge them with producing something that they neither know nor understand* [it is not likely for Allāh to challenge human beings with producing something that is neither known or impossible to be understood by the intellect and herein lies the essence of the miracle. For, if one challenges another to do something oneself did, then it must be something that is known or understood by the other person. Otherwise, it is an unfair challenge. Furthermore, this proves

¹⁹³ Qurān: 43:31

¹⁹⁴ Qurān: 74:25

¹⁹⁵ Qurān: 74:26

¹⁹⁶ Qurān: 36: 69

¹⁹⁷ Qurān: 2:23

that we can understand all of the Qurān although not necessarily every single word, and Allah's Attributes are from those words that are not necessarily understood, even though one can understand enough from them. An example of this is how we can generally understand from Allah being *al-Khāliq*, that He created the world. Similarly, it is understood from His Attribute *Rahmah* that by it, people will go to Paradise or will be saved from the torment of Hell. Yet, the literal meanings and realities of these Attributes are unknown).

Allāh, Exalted is He, says; *And when Our clear āyāt are recited unto them, those who not hope for the meeting with Us, say; Bring us a Qurān other than this, or change it.' Say; It is not for me to change it on my own accord. I only follow that which is revealed unto me.*¹⁹⁸ This confirmed that the Qurān consists of [amongst others, those] āyāt, which are recited unto them [meaning, the disbelievers, as they responded to parts of the Qurān being recited to them]. And He, Exalted is He, says: *No, but they are clear āyāt that are preserved in the breasts of those who have been given knowledge.*¹⁹⁹

And He, the Exalted, says after having sworn upon it: *That is indeed an honourable Qurān. In a Book well-guarded, which none can touch, except the purified.*²⁰⁰

And Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Kaf Ha Ya 'Ayn Šād.*²⁰¹ And: *Ĥa Mīm 'Ayn Šin Qāf.*²⁰² He begins twenty-nine šūrahs of the Qurān with individually separated letters. The Prophet ﷺ said in an authentic narration: *Whoever recites the Qurān and recites it properly, there will be ten good deeds for him, for every letter from it* [and the letters are described as being from the Qurān. Consequently, the Ḥanābilah hold that the *Kalām* of Allāh is with *Šawt* and *ḥarf* and they do not base this on personal *ijtihād*, but rather because there is textual evidence (i.e. *naṣṣ*) which points to this fact]. *And whoever recites the Qurān and he recites it improperly, there will be one good*

¹⁹⁸ Qurān: 10:15

¹⁹⁹ Qurān: 29:49

²⁰⁰ Qurān: 56:77-79

²⁰¹ Qurān: 19:1

²⁰² Qurān: 41:1

deed for him for every letter³⁰³ and this is an authentic hadith. And he ﷺ said: *Read the Qurān before there comes to you a people who will straighten its letters like an arrow is straightened; yet, it will not pass their throats* [meaning, they will recite it beautifully, yet what they recite will not reach their hearts and minds (i.e. they do not ponder over its meanings, nor are their hearts affected by it)]. *Their reward will be hasten and not postpone.*³⁰⁴ Abū Bakr and 'Umar said: To make 'irāb [meaning, to recite it properly according to the rules of recitation] of the Qurān is more beloved to us than to memorize some of its letters.³⁰⁵ [indicating that good and correct recitation is better than mere memorisation]. 'Alī said: *Whoever disbelieves in one letter from it; then he has disbelieved in all of it.*³⁰⁶ [and the one who denies a single letter of the Qurān becomes a disbeliever immediately. In addition to this, the differences in the authentic qirā'āt should not be used to say that the Qurān is not agreed upon. On the contrary, the statement that the Qurān is agreed upon means that all the authentic qirā'āt are agreed upon, and are mutawātir when it comes to their chains of transmission. The differences between the various qirā'āt originated from the Prophet ﷺ, who received these differences from Jibrīl who in turn received them from Allāh, free of any imperfections and Exalted is He. Furthermore, the different styles of recitation should not be mixed. If there is, for example,

³⁰³ Ibn Qudāmah reported it with this specific wording. Al-Taharknī (d. 260H) transmits in *al-Awsal*, vol. 7, no. 7574, a hadith with a slightly different wording, and perhaps this is the source of that which Ibn Qudāmah transmits. Although, Ibn Qudāmah said regarding it: 'authentic', it is classed as 'very weak' by other scholars. It must be pointed out that a similar, yet more reliable hadith is transmitted by al-Tirmidhī; albeit with a slightly different wording (see footnote 184). Therefore, the meaning of the narration that Ibn Qudāmah transmits seems to have a basis.

³⁰⁴ Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 235H) in *al-Muṣamad*, no. 98, transmits a narration that comes close to the wording used by Ibn Qudāmah. Similar narrations are also transmitted by Imām Aḥmad, *al-Muṣamad*, no. 14855 / Abū Dawūd, *al-Sunan*, no. 830; all, with variations in wording.

³⁰⁵ Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328H) in *Idāh al-Waḡf wa al-Ibtidā'*, vol. 1, no. 16, 22, transmits it with a slightly different wording.

³⁰⁶ Ibn Qudāmah reports it as a statement from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. It is found as such in his *Manārah fi al-Qurān*, no. 36. Al-Harawī (d. 481H) reports a similar statement from Ibn Mas'ūd in *Dhamm al-Kalām wa Ahlīh*, vol. 2, no. 186, as well as various other statements - to the same effect - from other than him. This version from Ibn Mas'ūd is also found in *al-Muṣannaḡ*, no. 16963 of 'Abd al-Razzāq (d. 211H). Ibn Abi Shaybah (d. 235H) reports this statement in his *Muṣannaḡ*, vol. 10, no. 30715, from Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī (d. 96H). It appears such a statement was not uncommon from the Companions and their Followers.

an obligatory madd (lengthening of the vowel) in one qirā'ah, it cannot be shortened according to another recitation; and if this is the case when it comes to tajwid, then how about the cases of different letters, words or pronunciations? With regards to the inauthentic qirā'āt, they cannot be used for recitation in the Prayer unless they are mutawātir, nor can they be used for general recitation because they are not considered to be Qurān. According to the relied upon position of the Ḥanābilah, they may be used in tafsir, as a way of explanation and elucidation.)

The Muslims have agreed upon the number of ṣūrahs, āyāt, words and letters of the Qurān (and this is correct from the angle of each mode of recitation (qirā'ah) independently, as this depends on which mode is being used. Different modes may have different words, numbers of āyāt, and variations, yet these differences are insignificant and do not detract from the magnificence of the Qurān. There exist some narrations in which Ibn Mas'ūd stated that he did not include the last two ṣūrahs (Mu'awwidhatayn), i.e. ṣūrah al-Falaq and ṣūrah al-Nās, in his version of the Qurān, or that he erased them²⁰⁷. However, 'not including' is not synonymous with, or understood as, him disagreeing with them being from the Qurān. Regarding the narration which states that he 'erased' them, it is shādh (anomalous), and contradicts that which is established through mutawātir narrations). **There is no disagreement amongst the Muslims concerning the disbelief of the one who denies a ṣūrah, āyah, word or letter from the Qurān, which has been agreed upon. In conclusion, this is conclusive proof that the Qurān is made of letters.**

²⁰⁷ Ahmad in his *Musnad*, no. 21186, 21188.

SEEING ALLAH IN THE HEREAFTER

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يَرَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ، وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وُجُوهٌ يُؤْمِنُ بِهَا صِيرَةٌ ۚ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ﴾.

The believers will see their Lord in the Hereafter with their own eyes and they will visit Him. He will speak to them and they will speak to Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *'(Some) faces on the day will be shiny and radiant. Looking at their Lord.'*²⁰⁸

وقال تعالى: ﴿كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَنُحْصَرُونَ﴾، فَلَمَّا حُجِبَ أُولَئِكَ فِي حَالِ الشَّحْطِ ذَلَّ عَلَىٰ أَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَرَوْنَهُ فِي حَالِ الرِّضَىٰ، وَإِلَّا لَمْ يَكُن بَيْنَهُمَا فَرْقٌ.

And, Exalted is He, says: *'Nay! Surely, they will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.'*²⁰⁹ If Allāh is screened from these people during a state in which they are in discontentment, then this indicates that the believers will see Him while being in (the opposite); a state of pleasure. If this were not so, there would be no distinction between the two.

وقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إِنَّكُمْ سَرَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ كَمَا تَرَوْنَ هَذَا الْقَمَرَ، لَا تَضَامُونَ فِي رُؤْيَاهُ». حَدَّثَ صَحِيحٌ مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ. وَهَذَا نَفْسُهُ لِلرُّؤْيَا بِالرُّؤْيَا لَا لِلْمَرْتَبَةِ بِالْمَرْتَبَةِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى لَا شَبِيهَ لَهُ وَلَا نَظِيرَ.

The Prophet ﷺ said: *'Indeed, you will see your Lord, just as you see this moon. There is no difficulty in your seeing it.'* The ḥadīth is authentic and agreed upon. This statement is a comparison between one manner of seeing and another manner of seeing. It is not a comparison between what is being seen and something else that is being seen, for indeed Allāh has neither comparisons nor equals.

²⁰⁸ Qurān: 75:22-23

²⁰⁹ Qurān: 83:15

The believers will see their Lord in the Hereafter with their own eyes²¹⁰ and they will visit Him. He will speak to them and they will speak to Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *(Some) faces on the day will be shiny and radiant. Looking at their Lord.*²¹¹

And, Exalted is He, says: *'Nay! Surely, they [i.e. the evil-doers] will be veiled from seeing their Lord that Day.'*²¹² If Allāh is screened from these people [i.e. the evil-doers] during a state in which they are in discontentment, then this indicates that the believers will see Him while being in (the opposite); a state of pleasure (and as a reward). If this were not so, there would be no distinction between the two (meaning, if this was the case, the believers and the disbelievers would be the same in this regard, because they would both not see their Lord. And if this was so, why would 'not seeing Him' be expressed as a punishment? This logical evidence shows that 'not seeing Him' is a punishment, and means that 'seeing Him' is due to believers being rewarded).

The Prophet ﷺ said: *'Indeed, you will see your Lord, just as you see this moon. There is no difficulty in your seeing it.'*²¹³ The ḥadīth is authentic and agreed upon. This statement is a comparison between one manner of seeing and another manner of seeing. It is not a comparison between what is being seen and something else that is being seen, for indeed Allāh has neither comparisons nor equals [Allāh will be seen very clearly, but this does not mean nor necessitate Him being seen as He is in reality. For, everything that can

²¹⁰ With regards to the seeing of Allāh by the believers, some related issues include:

- 1 Can Allāh be seen in this world? The Hanābilah say that He cannot be seen in this world, as is apparent from the story of Mūsā.
- 2 Did the Prophet see Allāh during the nightly journey and heavenly ascent? According to the relied upon position of the Madhhab, he did see Allāh with his eyes, and not as some say 'with his heart'.
- 3 Can one see Allāh in a dream? According to the Hanābilah one can see Allāh in a dream, yet, one cannot see Him as He actually is. This is apparent from the dream of Imām Aḥmad in which he saw Allāh, and it has preceded, and similar narrations are transmitted from other scholars of the Salaf.

²¹¹ Qurān: 75:22-23

²¹² Qurān: 83:15

²¹³ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 19190 / Al-Bukhārī, no. 573 / Muslim, no. 633

be seen in this world, is not necessarily seen as it actually is in reality. And when something in this world is seen, as it is in reality, it is not necessarily fully grasped nor understood in its totality.

The notion that Allah will be seen should not be objected to by claiming it is erroneous because it means one will be able to realise everything about Allah, and see Him how he actually is. This line of thought is incorrect, for saying that Allah will be seen, does not necessitate the above conclusion of the objector. Man is a part of creation, thus created and newly occurring (ḥādith), while Allah is pre-existent. Mankind moving from this world to the next does not bring about a change in this origin. Consequently, man's knowledge will always be restricted and limited and will never be able to comprehend all things or have access to ultimate knowledge i.e. Allah's *ʿIlm*. Therefore, it will never be possible to see Allah as He is in reality, for this requires ultimate knowledge which cannot be attained by His creation.

With regards to the seeing of Allah, the Exalted, (by His creation), it is impossible according to the Mu'tazilah, as Allah does not exist in a direction for this is something related to bodies (i.e. created beings). However, the Ḥanābilah say that seeing Allah does not necessarily mean that 'the seeing' is in a specific direction. As is known, the event is authentically narrated from the Prophet ﷺ, and the Ḥanābilah believe in it as such. How this 'seeing of Allah' will take place is something man should not concern himself with, as it is related to Allah and He is not confined nor is He related to limits or directions as opposed to His creation which is confined to such things].

THE QAḌĀ* (DIVINE DECREE) AND QADAR (PREORDAINMENT)

وَمِنْ صِفَاتِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى أَنَّهُ الْفَعَّالُ لِمَا يُهَيِّدُ، لَا يَكُونُ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ، وَلَا يَخْرُجُ شَيْءٌ عَنْ مَشِيئَتِهِ، وَلَيْسَ فِي الْعَالَمِ شَيْءٌ يَخْرُجُ عَنْ تَقْدِيرِهِ، وَلَا يَصْنَعُ إِلَّا عَنْ تَدْبِيرِهِ، وَلَا مَجِيدٌ عَنِ الْقَدْرِ التَّقْدِيرِ، وَلَا يَتَجَاوَزُ مَا خُطِّ لَهُ فِي اللُّوحِ الْمَسْطُورِ، أَرْزَأَ مَا الْعَالَمُ فَعَلُوهُ، وَلَمْ يَعْصِهِمْ لَمَّا عَالَمُوهُ، وَلَمْ يَشَأْ أَنْ يُطِيعُوهُ جَبِيحًا لَأَطَاعُوهُ، خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ وَأَفْعَالَهُمْ، وَقَدَّرَ أَرْزَاقَهُمْ وَأَحْصَاهُمْ، يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَيُعْذِلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِحُكْمِهِ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿لَا يُنَالُ عَمَّا يَقَعُ وَهُمْ يُنَالُونَ﴾.

From the Attributes of Allāh, is that He does whatever He wants. Nothing comes to pass, except by His *Irādah* and nothing escapes His *Mashī'ah*. There is nothing in this world that escapes from His *qadar* (preordainment) and nothing comes to pass except with His administration. No one can escape what has been written for him in the Preserved Tablet (*al-lawḥ al-masṭūr* or *al-lawḥ al-mahfūz*). He wills all that the creation does. Had He made them infallible, they would not disobey Him, and had He willed that they all obey Him, then they would surely obey Him. He created the creation and their actions and He determined their provisions and life-spans. He guides whom He wills by His *Ḥikmah*. Allāh, Exalted is He, says, 'He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while they will be questioned.'²¹⁴

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ﴾، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَعَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرَةٌ تَقْدِيرًا﴾، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا﴾، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَفْرَحْ صَدْرُهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَلَالًا حَرَجًا﴾.

²¹⁴ Qur'ān: 21: 23

Allah, Exalted is He, says: *Verily, We have created all things with qadar.*²¹⁵ And He, the Exalted, says: *He has created everything; and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements.*²¹⁶ Also He, the Exalted, says: *No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves, except that it is in a book; before We bring it into existence.*²¹⁷ And He, the Exalted, says: *Whoever Allah wills to guide, he opens his breast to Islām. And whoever He wills to send astray, he makes his breast closed and constricted.*²¹⁸

وَرَوَى ابْنُ عَمَرَ أَنَّ جِبْرِيلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَا الْإِيمَانُ؟ قَالَ: «أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَبِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرُهُ وَشَرُّهُ»، فَقَالَ جِبْرِيلُ: صَدَقْتَ. انْفَرَدَ مُسْلِمٌ بِإِغْرَاجِهِ. وَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «أَنْتُمْ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرُهُ وَشَرُّهُ، وَخَلْقُهُ وَمُؤَرَّهٌ». وَمِنْ دُعَاءِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الَّذِي عَلَّمَهُ الْخَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ يَدْعُو بِهِ فِي قُنُوتِ الرِّبَا: «وَلِيْنِي شَرُّ مَا قَضَيْتَ».

Ibn 'Umar reported that Jibril the Prophet ﷺ what imān was, so he responded: *'To Believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it.'* So, Jibril told him ﷺ: *'You have spoken truthfully.'*²¹⁹ as narrated by Muslim. And the Prophet ﷺ said: *'I believe in the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it, the sweet of it and the bitter of it.'*²²⁰ One of the supplications that the Prophet ﷺ taught al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, and which he himself used to supplicate with during the qunūt of witr was: *'And save me from the bad of what You have ordained.'*²²¹

²¹⁵ Qurān: 54:49

²¹⁶ Qurān: 25:2

²¹⁷ Qurān: 57:22

²¹⁸ Qurān: 6:125

²¹⁹ Al-Bukhārī, no. 50 / Muslim, no. 8.

²²⁰ Al-Ḥakīm in *Ma'rifat Uḥūm al-Ḥadīth*, no. 60, and it is 'weak'. Although, the meaning is established by the preceding narrations of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

²²¹ Abū Dawūd, no. 1425 / Al-Tirmidhī, no. 464.

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِصَاءَ اللَّهِ وَقَدْرَهُ حُجَّةً لَنَا فِي تَرْكِ أَمْرِهِ وَإِزْكَابِ نَوَاهِيهِ، بَلْ نَجِبُ أَنْ نُؤْمِنَ وَنَعْلَمَ أَنَّ لِلَّهِ الْحُجَّةَ عَلَيْنَا بِإِثْرَالِ الْكِتَابِ، وَيَقْدِرُ الرَّسُولِ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿إِنَّمَا يُكَلِّفُ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةً بِمَا أَسْأَلَ﴾.

We do not use the *qaḍā'* (Divine decree) of Allāh and His qadar as an excuse for us to abandon following His commandments or failing to observe His prohibitions. On the contrary, we are obligated to believe in (it) and know that Allāh has established proof against us by revealing the Scriptures and sending the Messengers. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *In order that mankind shall have no excuses against Allāh after the Messengers.*²²²

وَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ مَا أَمَرَ وَنَهَى إِلَّا الْمُسْتَطِيعَ لِلْفِعْلِ وَالتَّوَكُّدِ، وَأَنَّهُ لَمْ يُخَيِّرْ أَحَدًا عَلَى مَعْرَبَةٍ، وَلَا اضْطَرَّهُ إِلَى تَرْكِ طَاعَةٍ، وَقَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا﴾، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾،

We know that Allāh, the One free of imperfections, did not command or forbid anyone, except the one who is capable to do what is commended or avoid what is forbidden. He did not compel anyone to commit acts of disobedience (to Him) nor has He forced anyone to abandon obedience to Him. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Allāh has not given any soul a responsibility, except that He has given it the ability (to carry it out).*²²³ And He, the Exalted, says: *So fear Allāh as much as you are able.*²²⁴

وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿الزُّمُّ يُجْزَى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ لَا ظُلْمَ الْيَوْمَ﴾. فَذَلَّ عَلَى أَنَّ لِلْمُتَّبِعِ لِمَا رَكَّبْنَا يُجْزَى عَلَى حَسَبِهِ بِالثَّوَابِ، وَعَلَى سَبِيلِهِ بِالْعِقَابِ، وَهُوَ وَالْفِعْ بِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ وَقَدَرِهِ.

²²² Quran: 4:165

²²³ Quran: 2:286

²²⁴ Quran: 64:16

And He, the Exalted, says: *This Day every person will be recompensed for what he earned. There will be no injustice (upon anybody in their judgement) on that Day.*²²⁵ This indicated that every servant possesses actions and earnings; he will be recompensed for his good deeds with reward and for his bad deeds with punishment. This will occur by the *qaḍā'* of Allāh and His *qadar*.

Commentary: The Qaḍā (Divine Decree) and Qadar (Preordainment)

From the Attributes of Allāh, is that He does whatever He wants. Nothing comes to pass, except by His *irāḍah*²²⁶ and nothing escapes His *Mashī'ah*²²⁷. There is nothing in this world that escapes from His *qadar* (preordainment) and nothing comes to pass except with His administration. No one can escape what has been written for him in the Preserved Tablet (*al-lawḥ al-maṣṭūr* or *al-lawḥ al-mahfūz*) (at this point it is appropriate to mention that the scholars discussed and differentiated between two things: 1) Allāh's *ʿilm* that such-and-such will happen, and 2) His Divine Decree that such-and-such a thing will happen.

With regards to preordainment, there is a ḥadīth which states that it may be possible for a supplication to alter the preordainment of Allāh.²²⁸ A question arises regarding how this can be understood. It must be known that sometimes the *qaḍā'* and *qadar* are written (on the preserved tablet) in a particular way, yet Allāh knows it will change. Therefore, it appears that in essence there are two types of *qadar*: 1) a type that will never be changed, and 2) a type that can change. It must be stressed that this does not mean His *ʿilm* changes from a state of not-knowing or ignorance to knowing, when a particular event occurs. Or,

²²⁵ Qurān: 40:17

²²⁶ *Irāḍah* can be translated as the 'desire (to do something)'

²²⁷ *Mashī'ah* can be translated as 'will'

²²⁸ Al-Tirmidhi in his *Sunan*, no. 2139: 'Nothing turns back the Decree except supplication, and nothing increases the life-span except righteousness.' Also, al-Bukhārī, no. 2067, and Muslim, no. 2557 both transmit a ḥadīth in which it states that keeping good relations with one's family will have one's provision and life extended, which may also indicate the preordainment being changed.

that He knew something and then what He knew changed. Allāh is far exalted above this. His *ʿilm* is absolute in that He knows everything in detail before and as it occurs, and even if something, by His will, did not occur, He knows what would have happened if it did occur. His *ʿilm* is nothing like our knowledge, which is related to our senses and is in fact fallible. For example, if someone is in a desert and sees water from a distance, only to realise later when moving closer that there was no water. Allah's *ʿilm* is not like this, He does not make mistakes in His *ʿilm*, nor does He learn new things as events unfold; meaning His *ʿilm* does not update. Returning to the type of qadar that may change, that may be written in al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz or may be given to some angels, such as the angel of Death. This angel knew what was in the qadar of prophet Mūsā, yet when he went to Mūsā he could not take his soul, and this indicates that there is another preordainment according to Allāh and this took the form of the choice that was given to prophet Mūsā by which he was allowed to pass his hand over the back of an ox, and to live one extra year for every hair that he touched on the ox's back.

In summary, there is one type of qaḍāʾ and two types of qadar. One should also know that with regards to the lawḥ al-maḥfūz; not everything that will happen has been written in it, as this would imply that something created is able to contain and limit one of Allāh's Attributes, in this case His *ʿilm*, which is impossible]. **He wills all that the creation does** [e.g. He wills that someone goes on a vacation, or that a baby cries, or that someone's car is in a good or bad state, or that someone gets sick or dies. For this reason, the great Ḥanbali scholar al-Kalwadhānī (d. 510H) says, in a beautiful poem: 'if Allāh did not will something, yet that thing happened; it would be a deficiency (in Him)'²²⁹, as this would result in questioning Him as a God. For, how can He not will something yet it still happens, and vice versa. Allāh is far removed from this type of deficiency. This erroneous position was held by the Mu'tazilah who stated that people create their own evil actions and that these are not willed by Allāh. We seek refuge with Allāh from this type of speech]. **Had He made them infallible, they would not disobey Him, and**

²²⁹ Al-Kalwadhānī, *al-Qaṣṣah al-Dalīyah*, line 29.

had He willed that they all obey Him, then they would surely obey Him. He created the creation and their actions and He determined their provisions and life-spans. He guides whom He wills by His *ḥikmah*²³⁰. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *He cannot be questioned as to what He does, while they will be questioned.*²³¹ [therefore, one may not question Allāh's decisions and determinations, by saying 'why did Allāh decide to do so-and-so' However, it is permissible to ask why a certain thing happened. Regarding the permissible type of questions, it must be pointed out that in relation to the issue of cause and effect, there is a difference between the 'metaphorical reason' and the 'real reason' Reasons, other than 'Allāh willed it' that may be given in response to the question of why something happened, are only of a metaphoric nature, however in all cases and in reality, the real reason is always that it was the will of Allāh. For example, when someone is sick and takes medication to cure him or herself, the medication that is taken is the metaphorical reason, while the real reason for the cure is in fact and reality that Allāh cures. In the same way, it is in reality not the fire that burns, but Allāh that burns, and it is not the knife that cuts, but Allāh that cuts. Therefore, the knife may be as sharp as it can be, it will not cut anything as long as Allāh does not wills it to cut. It would however be very confusing and chaotic for people if fire randomly burned or did not burn, or a very sharp knife cuts at one time yet is not able to cut at other times, and so Allāh created and assigned patterns in these things, and this is from the Sunnah of Allāh (i.e. His way or His pattern) in His created universe. Allāh said in the Qurān that His Sunnah is not changeable²³². So, fire will always (or as expected) burn, and a sharp knife will always (or as expected) cut. If there is an exception, it may be called a miracle, such as when Allāh ordered the fire to be gentle to prophet Ibrāhīm, and it did not burn him when he was cast into it as was mentioned in the Qurān²³³.

Lastly, with regards to things that Allāh willed to happen, the Ḥanābilah state that not all of His actions necessitate benefit of some sort. In this the Ḥanābilah again opposed the Mu'tazilah, who stated that

²³⁰ *Ḥikmah* can be translated as 'wisdom'

²³¹ *Qur'an*. 21:23

²³² See *sūrah Fāṭir* (Qur'an: 35:43): *but you will not find any alteration in the way of Allāh.*

²³³ See *sūrah al-Anbiyā'* (Qur'an: 21:69): *ﷻ first be coolness and safety upon Abraham...*

Allāh is obligated to do the best or the most beneficial thing. On the contrary, it is as the author mentioned, Allāh does whatever He wants).

Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Verily, We have created all things with qadar.*²³⁴ And He, the Exalted, says: *He has created everything; and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements.*²³⁵ [and only Allāh knows its measurements, for they are His measurements. The measurements and standards other than His are not taken into consideration. Some of the measurements of Allāh are known to certain degrees and can be utilised by His creation, such as His shar'ah. Yet, the knowledge of His measurements is extremely limited] Also He, the Exalted, says: *No calamity befalls on the earth or in yourselves, except that it is in a book; before We bring it into existence.*²³⁶ And He, the Exalted, says: *Whoever Allāh wills to guide, he opens his breast to Islām. And whoever He wills to send astray, he makes his breast closed and constricted.*²³⁷

Ibn 'Umar reported that Jibril asked the Prophet ﷺ what imān (faith) was, so he responded: *'To Believe in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, The Last Day and the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it.'* So, Jibril told him ﷺ: *You have spoken truthfully.*²³⁸ as narrated by Muslim. And the Prophet ﷺ said: *I believe in the qadar, the good of it and the bad of it, the sweet of it and the bitter of it.*²³⁹ One of the supplications that the Prophet ﷺ taught al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī (d. 51H), and which he himself used to supplicate with during the qunūt of witr was: *'And save me from the bad of what You have ordained.'*²⁴⁰

We do not use the *qaḍā'* (Divine Decree) of Allāh and His qadar as an excuse for us to abandon following His commandments [by saying, for example, Allāh willed that I did not pray 'Asr] or failing to observe His prohibitions [by saying, for example, Allāh willed that I

²³⁴ Qurān: 54:49

²³⁵ Qurān: 25:2

²³⁶ Qurān: 57:22

²³⁷ Qurān: 6:125

²³⁸ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 191 / Al-Bukhārī, no. 50 / Muslim, no. 8.

²³⁹ al-Hakīm in *Ma'rifah Ulūm al-Hadīth*, no. 60 / al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, no. 13581, it is 'weak'. Although, the meaning has a basis in the preceding narrations.

²⁴⁰ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 1717 / Abū Dawūd, no. 1425 / Al-Tirmidhī, no. 464

commit this sin]. On the contrary, we are obligated to believe in (it) and know that Allāh has established proof against us by revealing the Scriptures and sending the Messengers. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *In order that mankind shall have no excuses against Allāh after the Messengers.*'

We know that Allāh, the One free of imperfections, did not command or forbid anyone, except the one who is capable to do what is commended or avoid what is forbidden. He did not compel anyone to commit acts of disobedience (to Him) nor has He forced anyone to abandon obedience to Him²⁴¹. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *Allāh has not given any soul a responsibility, except that He has given it the ability (to carry it out).*²⁴² And He, the Exalted, says: *So fear Allāh as much as you are able.*²⁴³

And He, the Exalted, says: *This Day every person will be recompensed for what he earned. There will be no injustice (upon anybody in their judgement) on that Day.*²⁴⁴ This indicates that every servant possesses actions [meaning, one can do things according to one's choice. Therefore, one cannot say 'I did not do, but, Allāh did'. Of course, ultimately it was Allāh's doing, but according to ones doing and choice²⁴⁵] and earnings [meaning, one deserved a particular thing to happen according to his action]; he will be recompensed for his good deeds with reward and for his bad deeds with punishment. This will occur by the *qaḍā'* of Allāh and His.

²⁴¹ It can be mentioned here that the *irādah* of Allāh is of two types: 1) universal *irādah* (*ikawni*) and legislative *irādah* (*shar'i*). The difference between both types is that the former necessitates that what is decreed by Allāh will occur, yet it does not necessarily mean that it is something beloved to Him. While the later type is that which is desired and loved by Allāh, yet this does not mean that it will necessarily occur. To give an example of the universal *irādah* would be His saying: *'And whomever Allāh desires (i.e. wills) to guide, He opens his breast to Islam. And whomever He desires (i.e. wills) to send astray, He makes his breast closed and constricted'* (Qurān: 6: 125). Or, the fact that He created Shayṭān, yet He hates him (i.e. Shayṭān). An example of the legislative type would be His saying: *'Allāh desires (i.e. loves) to accept your repentance'* (Qurān 4: 27). Him desiring this repentance, does not necessitate that everybody repents, for people may or may not repent. Likewise, his command to pray, yet, people may or may not pray based on their obedience or disobedience.

²⁴² Qurān: 2: 286

²⁴³ Qurān: 64: 16

²⁴⁴ Qurān: 40: 17

²⁴⁵ It must be stressed that this does not mean Allāh only acted after or at the same time one made the choice to act. On the contrary, Allāh already knows the choices and doings of every person before they choose and do it.

THE REALITY OF IMĀN

وَالْإِيمَانُ قَوْلٌ بِاللِّسَانِ وَعَمَلٌ بِالْأَرْكَانِ وَعَقْدٌ بِالْجَنَانِ، تَزِيدُ بِالطَّاعَةِ وَيَنْقُصُ بِالْعِصْيَانِ. قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: «وَمَا أَمَرُوا إِلَّا لِيَحْبُذُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حَقَّاءَ وَبَيِّنِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَزَيُّوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ»، فَجَعَلَ عِبَادَةَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَإِخْلَاصَ الْقَلْبِ، وَالْإِيمَانَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَإِيمَانَ الزَّكَاةَ، كُلَّهُ مِنَ الدِّينِ.

Imān (faith) is a statement on the tongue, an action of the limbs and belief in the heart. It increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *And they were commanded not, except that they should worship Allah alone, making the Religion sincere to Him, and establish the Prayer, and give the Zakāt, and that is the right religion.*²⁴⁶ So, He made the worship of Allāh the Exalted, the sincerity of the heart, the establishment of prayer and the giving of Zakāh, all as being from the Religion.

وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «(الْإِيمَانُ بِضْعٌ وَسِتُّونَ شُعْبَةً، أَحَدُهَا شَهَادَةُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَأَدَانَا إِمَامَةً الْأَدَى عَنِ الطَّبِيعِ)». فَجَعَلَ الْقَوْلَ وَالْعَمَلُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ. وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: «فَرَادَاهُمْ إِيْمَانًا»، وَقَالَ: «لِيَزَادُوا إِيْمَانًا». وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «(يَخْرُجُ مِنَ النَّارِ مَنْ قَالَ: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. وَهِيَ قَلْبُهُ بِفَقَالٍ يَرَى لَوْ عَزَدَلَهُ لَوْ ذَرَبَهُ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ)» فَجَعَلَهُ مُتَفَاعِلًا.

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *Imān consists of more than seventy branches. The highest of them is to testify that: 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh'. And the lowest of them is removing a harmful object from the road.* The Prophet ﷺ made speech and action part of Imān. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *it has increased their imān*²⁴⁷ And He says: *In order that may grow more in imān.*²⁴⁸ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

²⁴⁶ Qurān. 98:5

²⁴⁷ Qurān. 9:124

²⁴⁸ Qurān. 48:4

'Whoever says, None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh' and he has in his heart imān, the weight of a wheat grain, or a mustard seed or an atom, will be extracted from the Hellfire.' Therefore, he made it of different levels.

Commentary: The Reality of Imān

Imān (faith) is a statement on the tongue, an action of the limbs and belief in the heart [for the Ḥanābilah imān is threefold: speech, actions and belief. Yet, it must be pointed out that imān does not rely on three pillars. In essence its pillars are the belief in the heart and the uttering of the testimony of faith (shahādah), as long as there is nothing that prevents one from saying it. Furthermore, the discussion concerning actions being a pillar of imān, meaning one becomes a disbeliever unless one performs actions, is an innovation in itself, regardless of the conclusion that is reached. Apart from this, it is correct to say, as is stated by Ibn Qudāmah and other scholars, that imān manifests itself in three ways: 1) belief in the heart, 2) utterance on the tongue and 3) actions of the limb. So, it does in fact consist of three realities.

Thus, the pillars of imān are: 1) the belief in the heart, and 2) the testimony of faith upon the tongue, and this should translate into actions. However, action itself is not a pillar of imān and does not determine whether one is a believer or a disbeliever. Naturally, some actions will have this effect, for example, intentionally desecrating the Qurān by throwing it into a toilet, or the action of apostasy or rejecting the Prayer (provided certain conditions are met). Although, in reality what determines kufr, is the intention that preceded the act even if it is not followed by the actual action itself. This shows that the matter wholly concerns what is in the heart, and although action is a part of imān, it is not a condition for, or a pillar of it). **It increases with obedience and decreases with disobedience** (and this is the Ḥanbalī 'aqidah, that is found with its scholars, and is like what Imām Aḥmad said²⁴⁹). **Allāh, the Exalted, says: 'And they were commanded not, except that they should worship Allāh alone, making the Religion sincere to Him, and**

²⁴⁹ See *Uṣūl al-Sunnah* by Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, p. 9 / al-Iḥṣāl, al-Sunnah, no. 1002, 1010.

establish the Prayer, and give the Zakat, and that is the right religion.²³⁰

So, He made the worship of Allāh the Exalted, the sincerity of the heart, the establishment of prayer and the giving of Zakāh, all as being from the Religion [so, action is required even if it be slight. And even the one who does not pray can be a Muslim, because there is no takfir before he is called to pray by the ruler or his deputy, which can be a qualified judge or someone with religious authority licensed by the ruler. If he refuses, there are particular implications according to the laws of fiqh²³¹, but he may in fact still be considered Muslim according to Allāh, even if he was announced to be a disbeliever by the judge. It is important to keep in mind that there is a difference between the ruling of Allāh in fact and reality, and the worldly ruling applied by and between people].

²³⁰ Qurān. 98:5

²³¹ In the commentary to *Umdah al-Talib*, Shaykh Yūsuf b. Šādiq states the following (the original text is bold, and its commentary is given between brackets []):

If someone rejects its obligation [meaning, insists on rejecting the obligation of the Prayer, by saying it is only recommended or merely something good to do, or, when someone actually prays all of the prescribed prayers, yet maintains they are not obligatory], he has disbelieved [however, this verdict is only given by scholars and should not be carried out by layman, for the person in question may have an excuse which should be dealt with first. Furthermore, when this person eventually becomes a disbeliever, it does not mean he is executed immediately, for it may be that this person has not even become a Muslim yet, as he may not be aware of essential information which led him to the original rejection. Only when this person has no excuse and insists in rejecting the obligation of prayer does he become an apostate-disbeliever; but this should be established by a competent judge] also a person who leaves it [i.e. prayer] out of laziness [or indifference], when he is called by the *imām* [meaning, the caliph or ruler] or his deputy and he rejects until the second [prayer] time [meaning, the person who is called by the ruler or his deputy to pray, for example, Zuhr prayer; but he does not pray it during its time period. Then 'Asr time enters and during it he still does not pray Zuhr, until the remaining time of the 'Asr is too short to include both prayers. In other words, this person is kept until the second prayer's time becomes too short to be able to pray the two prayers. If this is the case, then the ruler or his deputy may announce this person to be a disbeliever and imprison him for three days and nights], and [during it] he [the one who rejects the obligation of prayer or the one who leaves it [i.e. does not perform it]] is called to repent for three days [during these days scholars are sent to him in order to convince him to repent and he is called to pray every time the prayer time enters. His repentance is by praying, either in public or in private, depending on the situation. Qāḍī Abū Ya'la stated that a way to convince someone may be by beating him. Consequently, if he does not repent and does not pray within these three days, a state execution may occur].

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *Imān consists of more than seventy branches. The highest of them is to testify that: 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh.' And the lowest of them is removing a harmful object from the road.*²⁵² [and this means that imān can be translated into actions (i.e. actions can indicate the existence of faith)] The Prophet ﷺ made speech and action part of imān. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *It has increased their imān.*²⁵³ And He says: *In order that they may grow more in imān.*²⁵⁴ The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *'Whoever says, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh' and he has in his heart imān, the weight of a wheat grain, or a mustard seed or an atom, he will be extracted from the Hellfire.*²⁵⁵ Therefore, he made it [meaning, imān] of different levels.

²⁵² This version is from Ibn Hibbān, *Seṭṭḥ*, no. 193 / other versions are narrated o.a. by Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 9748 / al-Tirmidhī, no. 2614.

²⁵³ Qurʾān, 9:124

²⁵⁴ Qurʾān, 48:4

²⁵⁵ Imām Aḥmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 12772 / al-Bukhārī, no. 44 / Muslim, no. 193.

THE OBLIGATION TO BELIEVE IN WHAT THE MESSENGER HAS INFORMED US OF

وَجِبَ الْإِيمَانُ بِكُلِّ مَا أَخْبَرَ بِهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَصَحَّ بِهِ الثَّقَلُ عِنْدَ مَا شَافَعْنَاهُ لَوْ غَابَ عَنَّْا، نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ حَقٌّ وَصِدْقٌ، وَنَوَاقِصُ ذَلِكَ مَا عَقَلْنَاهُ وَجَهَلْنَاهُ، وَلَمْ نَطْلُعْ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ مَعْنَاهُ، يَفْلُحُ حَدِيثُ الْإِسْرَاءِ وَالْمِعْرَاجِ وَكَانَ يَقْطَعُ لَا ضَمَامًا، فَإِنْ قُرُنَا أَنْكَرْتَهُ وَأَخْبَرْتَهُ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ تَكْثِيرُ السَّامِعَاتِ. وَمِنْ ذَلِكَ أَنَّ مَلَكَ الْمَوْتِ لَمَّا جَاءَ إِلَى مُوسَى عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَتَّبِعِينَ رُوحَهُ لَطْمَهُ فَفَقَأَ عَيْنَهُ، فَرَجَعَ إِلَى رَبِّهِ فَرَدَّ عَلَيْهِ عَيْنَهُ.

We are obligated to have faith in everything that the Prophet ﷺ informed us of and in what has been authentically transmitted from him, concerning that which we ourselves witnessed or that which we were absent from. We know that it is reality and truth. There is no difference in these matters between that which we can understand and that which we may be ignorant of and have not come to know the reality of its meaning. An example of this is the narration concerning the Isra' and Mi'ra (Nightly Journey and Heavenly Ascension), during which he was awake and not dreaming; for indeed Quraysh denied it and considered it something incredible, and they did not deny dreams. Another example is when the Angel of Death approached Mūsā, peace upon him, in order to take his soul. He struck him and gouged out his eye, so he returned to his Lord who gave him his eye back.

وَمِنْ ذَلِكَ أَشْرَاطُ السَّاعَةِ، يَفْلُحُ خُرُوجُ الدَّجَالِ، وَتُرُوبُ جِصْسِي نَبِيٍّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَتُفْتَلَتُهُ، وَخُرُوجُ تَاجُوجٍ وَتَأْجُوجٍ، وَخُرُوجُ النَّابِئَةِ، وَطُلُوعُ الْقَمَسِيِّ مِنْ مَغْرِبِهَا، وَأَشْدَاوُ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا صَحَّ بِهِ الثَّقَلُ.

And from those things are the Signs of the Hour, such as the emergence of the Dajjal; the descent of 'Isa b. Maryam, peace upon him, who will then kill him, the emergence of Ya'jûj and Ma'jûj, the emergence of the Beast, the rising of the sun from the West, and what is similar to these things from what has been authentically reported.

وَلَقَدْ أَتَيْنَاهُ بِالْحَقِّ، وَقَدْ اسْتَعَاذَ الشَّيْطَانُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِهِ، وَأَمَرَ بِهِ فِي كُلِّ صَلَاةٍ. وَلَقَدْ أَتَيْنَاهُ بِالْحَقِّ، وَشَوَّلَ مُنْكَرٌ وَكَفَرٌ خَلْقًا، وَالْبَيْتُ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ خَلْقٌ وَقَدْ لَفَّ حَمِيمٌ يَنْفُخُ إِسْرَافِيلُ غَلَّةَ السَّلَامِ فِي الصُّورِ. «فَلَمَّا هُمْ بَيْنَ الْأَحْزَابِ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَهْتَبُونَ».

The Punishment and Pleasure of the grave are true. The Prophet ﷺ would seek refuge from it, and he commanded that this be done in every prayer. The fitnah (Trial) of the grave is true. The questions of Munkar and Nakir are true. The Resurrection after death is true and it will occur when Isrâfîl, peace upon him, blows the Trumpet: 'And behold from the graves they will come out quickly to their Lord.'²⁵⁴

وَيُخْفَرُ النَّاسُ بِرَمِّ الْقِيَامَةِ خِفَاءً غَرَاءَ هَرَلًا يُهَيِّئُهَا لِيَتَقَفُونَ فِي مَوْجِبِ الْيَمَانَةِ، حَتَّى يَنْفُخَ بِهِمْ نَهْيًا مُخَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَيُحَاسِبُهُمُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى، وَتَنْصَبُ الْمَوَازِينُ، وَتَنْفَرُ الْمَوَازِينُ، وَتَنْطَايِرُ صَحَائِفُ الْأَعْمَالِ إِلَى الْأَيْمَانِ وَالشَّمَائِلِ «فَلَمَّا مِنْ أَوْفَى كِتَابِهِ يَتَبَرَّوْهُ • فَسَوَّفَ يُخَاسَبُ جَنَانًا يَبِيرُ • وَيَنْقَلِبُ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ عَشْرُونَ • وَأَمَّا مَنْ أَوْفَى كِتَابُهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ • فَسَوَّفَ يَذْهَبُ ثَبِيرًا • وَيَصْلَى سَجِيرًا».

Mankind will be gathered on the Day of Judgement, barefoot, naked, uncircumcised, and having nothing with them. They will stop at the final place of standing, until our Prophet ﷺ intercedes for them and Allah, blessed and exalted is He, calls them all to give account for their deeds; then the Scales will be erected, the records will be distributed and the books of the deeds will be dispersed into the right and left hands: 'Then as for him who will be given his record in his right hand, he surely

will receive an easy reckoning. And will return back to his family in joy! But whoever is given his record behind his back (or in his right hand), he will invoke (for his) destruction. And he shall enter the Blazing Fire and (he shall be) made to taste its burning flames.²⁵⁷

والميزانُ لهُ كَيْتَانِ وَلِسَانٌ، تُرَوِّدُ بِهِ أَقْسَالُ الْيَبَادِ «فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ» وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ».

The mizān (Balance) has two scales and a tongue, by which the deeds are weighed: Then those whose Balance (of good deeds) are heavy, they are the successful. And those whose Balance (of good deeds) are light, they are those who lose their own selves, in Hell will they abide (forever).²⁵⁸

وَلَتَنَبِّئَنَّا مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَوْضَ فِي الْقِيَامَةِ مَاءُهُ أَشَدُّ نَاحِيًا مِنَ اللَّبَنِ، وَأَحْلَى مِنَ الْقَسَلِ، وَأَنَابِقُهُ عِنْدَ لُجُومِ السَّمَاءِ، مَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ شَرْبَةً لَمْ يَطْمَأْ بِقَدَمَا أَبَدًا.

For our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the ḥawḍ (Basin) on the Day of Resurrection; its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Its drinking vessels are as numerous as the stars in the sky. Whoever drinks of it, will never again experience thirst.

وَالصِّرَاطُ حَقٌّ يَجُوزُهُ الْأَبْرَارُ، وَيَزِلُّ عَنْهُ الْفَاجِرُ.

The girāṭ (Bridge) is true. The righteous people will cross it and the evil ones will fall from it.

يُخَفِّضُ نَبِيُّنَا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِمَنْ دَخَلَ النَّارَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكُتُبِ يَخْرُجُونَ بِشَفَاعَتِهِ بَقَدَمَا اخْتَرَلُوا وَصَارُوا قَحْمًا وَحُمْمًا، فَدَخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِشَفَاعَتِهِ. وَلِسَالِمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ شَفَاعَاتٌ، قَالَ تَعَالَى: «وَلَا يَصْفَقُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَى وَهُمْ مِنْ شَرِّهِ شَقِيقُونَ». وَلَا تَقْبَلُ الْكَلِمَ شَفَاعَةُ النَّاصِيَةِ.

²⁵⁷ Quran: 84:7-12

²⁵⁸ Quran: 23: 102-103

Our Prophet ﷺ will intercede for whoever enters the Fire from the people of his Ummah who have committed major sins. They will come out of it due to his shafā'ah (Intercession), but only after having been burned until they became ashes and charcoal. They will then enter Paradise due to his intercession. Intercession will also be done by the rest of the Prophets, believers and Angels. Allāh, Exalted is He, says: *And they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him.*²⁵⁹ The intercession of the intercessors will be of no avail to the disbelievers.

وَالْجَنَّةُ وَالنَّارُ مَعْلُومَتَانِ لَا تَغْنِيَانِ، فَالْجَنَّةُ مَأْوَى أَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَالنَّارُ عِقَابُ لِأَعْدَائِهِ، وَأَهْلُ
الْجَنَّةِ لَهَا مُخَلَّدُونَ. «إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ» لَا يُفْتَرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ
بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ».

Jannah and Nār (Paradise and Hellfire) are two creations that will not cease to exist. Paradise is the final resting place of the awliyā' of Allāh, while the Hellfire is the place of punishment for His enemies. The inhabitants of Paradise will remain therein eternally: *Verily, the sinful evildoers will be in the punishment of Hell to remain in it eternally, (their torment) will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regret and sorrow.*²⁶⁰

وَأُتِيَ بِالمَوْتِ فِي صُورَةِ كَبْشٍ أَمْلَحَ، فَذُبَحَ بَيْنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ، ثُمَّ بُعِثَ: (يَا أَهْلَ الْجَنَّةِ
خُلُودٌ وَلَا مَوْتٌ، يَا أَهْلَ النَّارِ خُلُودٌ وَلَا مَوْتٌ.)

Death will be brought in the form of a sturdy ram and slaughtered between Paradise and Hellfire. Then it will be said: *'O inhabitants of Paradise! Eternity for you and no (more) death! O inhabitants of Hell! Eternity for you and no (more) death!'*

²⁵⁹ Qurān: 21:28

²⁶⁰ Qurān: 43:74-75

We are obligated to have faith in everything that the Prophet ﷺ informed us of and in what has been authentically transmitted from him, concerning that which we ourselves witnessed [through our senses] or that which we were absent from³⁶¹. We know that it is reality and truth [especially when something is authentically transmitted]. There is no difference in these matters between that which we can understand and that which we may be ignorant of and have not come to know the reality of its meaning. An example of this is the narration concerning the *Isrā' and Mi'rāj* (Nightly Journey and Heavenly Ascension)³⁶², during which he was awake and not dreaming [and this is the *mu'tamad* of the *Madhhab*. He ﷺ was awake during these events and saw Allāh with his eyes]; for indeed *Quraysh* denied it and considered it something incredible [and unbelievable], and they did not deny dreams [for, if someone went to them with a dream in which such-and-such happened, they would not bother to refute or deny the dream. However, what the Prophet ﷺ said bothered them, because he claimed it happened to him in reality (i.e. while being awake)]. Another example is when the Angel of Death approached *Mūsā*, peace upon him, in order to take his soul. He [i.e. *Mūsā*] struck him and gouged out his eye, so he returned to his Lord who gave him his eye back³⁶³ [and it may be difficult for some to understand and believe that this has happened in reality, but it has been authentically reported from the Prophet ﷺ and one should submit to and believe in it accordingly].

³⁶¹ This chapter is concerned with *al-sam'iyah* (auditory reports). It is everything that is affirmed through hearing (i.e. Divine Legislation). One's intellect has no part in these matters, and therefore one should believe in and submit to them.

³⁶² The primary source for this event is the *Qurān*, in which Allāh says: "Glorified is He who took his servant for a journey by night from al-masjid al-Haram to al-masjid al-Aqsa" (*Qurān*: 17:1). The *ahādith* provide further detail regarding this event. See for example, *al-Bukhārī*, no. 349, 7517 / *al-Nisā'ī*, no. 450.

³⁶³ See footnote no. 182.

And from those things [that one is required to accept and have faith in] **are the Signs of the Hour** [i.e. the Day of Judgment], **such as: the emergence of the Dajjāl²⁶⁴; the descend of 'Isā b. Maryam, peace upon him,** [and this does not contradict with the claim that the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is the last prophet, for 'Isā will not descend as a prophet or a messenger. Instead, he will descend as a servant of Allāh with particular task to carry out (i.e. kill the Dajjāl). Furthermore, he will follow the shari'ah of Muḥammad and not his own. According to some narrations he will pray behind a Muslim imām²⁶⁵], **who will then kill him²⁶⁶** [i.e. the Dajjāl]; **the emergence of Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj²⁶⁷; the emergence of the Beast²⁶⁸; the rising of the sun from the West²⁶⁹, and what is similar to these things from what has been authentically reported²⁷⁰** [these examples are supported by numerous authentic narrations].

The Punishment and Pleasure [or reward] of the grave are true. The Prophet ﷺ would seek refuge from it [meaning, from the

²⁶⁴ See for example, al-Bukhārī, no. 1882. 'Allāh's Messenger ﷺ told us a long narrative about al-Dajjāl, and among the many things he mentioned, was his saying: 'al-Dajjāl will come...'

²⁶⁵ See for example, Muslim, no. 156. 'A section of my people will not cease fighting for the Truth and will prevail till the Day of Resurrection. He said: 'Isā b. Maryam would then descend and their commander would invite him to come and lead them in prayer, but he would say: No, some amongst you are commanders over some [amongst you]. This is the honour from Allāh for this Ummah.'

²⁶⁶ See for example, Abū Dawūd, nr 4321. 'Then prophet 'Isā b. Maryam will descend at the white minaret to the east of Damascus. He will then catch him up at the gate of Ludd and kill him (i.e. al-Dajjāl).'

²⁶⁷ The primary source for this event is the Qur'ān, in which Allāh says: 'Until, when Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj are let, and they swiftly swarm from every mound' (Qur'ān: 96:97). And, what is mentioned in sūrah al-Kahf (Qur'ān: 18:93-99) of the story of Dhū al-Qarṣayn.

Also, see Muslim, no. 2937. 'And then Allāh would send Ya'jūj and Ma'jūj and they would swarm down from every slope. The first of them would pass the lake of Tiberias and drink out of it. And when the last of them would pass, he would say: There was once water there, and it is part of a very long ḥadīth concerning other signs of the Hour.

²⁶⁸ The primary source for this event is the Qur'ān, in which Allāh says: 'And when the Word is fulfilled against them (the unjust), we shall produce from the earth a beast for them, in speech to them' (Qur'ān: 27:82).

Also, see Muslim, no. 2901 in which ten signs of the Last Hour are mentioned, one of them being the coming of the Beast.'

²⁶⁹ Al-Bukhārī, no. 7121. 'Till the sun rises from the West. So, when the sun will rise and the people will see it...'

²⁷⁰ Like the coming of al-Mahdī. As is transmitted by Abū Dawūd, no. 4283, in his Sunan in book 38. 'If only one day of this time (world) remained, Allāh would raise up a man from my family who would fill this earth with justice as it has been filled with oppression.'

punishment and torment), and he commanded that this be done in every prayer [Ibn 'Abbās reported that he ﷺ taught his companions to say this supplication, just like he taught them *ṣūrah*s from the *Qurān*], instructing them to say: 'O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the torment of hell. And I seek refuge with You from the torment of the grave, and I seek refuge with You from the trial of al-Masīḥ al-Dajjal, and I seek refuge with You from the trial of life and death.'²⁷¹ The relied upon position in the *Ḥanbalī madhhab* is that it is recommended to say the aforementioned supplication in every prayer, while the other opinion in the *Ḥanbalī madhhab* is that it is obligatory. 'Obligation' means that if it is left out intentionally, the Prayer becomes invalid immediately, and if it is left out due to forgetfulness or ignorance, one must perform the prostration of forgetfulness. The justification for this later position (i.e. including the performance of this supplication amongst the obligatory aspects (*waḥḍat*)) is that it was the habit of the Prophet ﷺ to say it during the Prayer, and he did not leave its performance. Although an obligatory aspect has to be supported by clear evidence, this was included nonetheless because the Prophet ﷺ never left it out. Additionally, to say that the four things mentioned in this supplication are mere metaphors is *kufr*²⁷². The *fitnah* (Trial) of the grave is true²⁷³. The questions of *Munkar* and *Nakir* are true²⁷⁴. The Resurrection after death is true and will occur when *Isrāfīl*²⁷⁵, peace upon him, blows the Trumpet²⁷⁶

²⁷¹ Reported by Muslim, no. 590.

²⁷² A general principle is, something is only taken as a metaphor if there is evidence to indicate this, or there is evidence that the literal meaning cannot be intended.

²⁷³ A long narration detailing the trials of the grave, such as the questioning, punishment and pleasure is transmitted by al-Tirmidhī in his *Sunan*, no. 4753.

²⁷⁴ Al-Tirmidhī, no. 1071. 'When the deceased, or he said when one of you, is buried, two angels, black and blue come to him. One of them is called al-Munkar, and the other al-Nakir. They say: 'What did you used to say about this man?' So, he says what he was saying (before death). 'He is Allah's slave and His Messenger. I testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger'.

²⁷⁵ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī mentions in *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 20, p. 295-297, various *ahādith* which mention *Isrāfīl* as the angel that is designated to blow the Trumpet. One of these *ahādith* is transmitted by Abū al-Shaykh al-Aḥbahānī in *Kitāb al-'Aḥzām*, no. 389: 'Then He (Allah) said, 'Be!' and *Isrāfīl* was (created)... and he was commanded to take the Trumpet, and he took it.' This and other *ahādith* are also mentioned by al-Bayhaqī in *al-Ba'ith wa al-Nashir* (p. 336-339).

²⁷⁶ There will be two distinct trumpet blows. The first is the 'blowing of terror' (*nafkha* al-

[there is some disagreement amongst the scholars whether there are two or three blowings of the Trumpet. The relied upon position of the Hanbali madhhab states that it is three, and one can refer to *Lawāmu' al-Anwar* by al-Safārini and its *Mukhtaṣar* by al-Shaṭṭi. The first blowing is called the *nafkhah al-faza'* (blowing of terror), and it will terrify the creation of Allāh. The second is called the *nafkhah al-ṣa'qah* (blowing of the shock), and it will cause every living thing to die. The third is the *nafkhah al-qiya'm li-rabb al-'ālamīn* (blowing of the standing before the Lord of the worlds) and it causes the Resurrection and standing before Allāh at the dawn of the Day of Judgement. The second blowing can also be described as the *nafkhah al-mawt* (blowing of death), while the third may also be called the *nafkhah al-ba'th wa al-nushûr* (blowing of the Resurrection and standing) as the first blowing will cause all people to die. With regards to the second blowing of the Trumpet, Allāh, the Exalted, says: *'And behold from the graves they will come out quickly to their Lord.'*²⁷⁷

Mankind will be gathered on the Day of Judgement, barefoot, naked, uncircumcised, and having nothing with them. They will stop at the final place of standing, until our Prophet ﷺ intercedes for them [and this is al-shafa'ah al-'uẓmā (the Great Intercession)]²⁷⁸ and Allāh, blessed and exalted is He, calls them all to give account for their deeds; then the Scales will be erected, the records will be distributed and the books of the deeds will be dispersed into the right and left hands [and all of these things are from the ghābyāt

faza') which will alarm and frighten mankind, after which they will fall dead. The second is the 'blowing of resurrection' (*nafkhah al-ba'th*), which will resurrect mankind and causes them to rise from their graves. As is mentioned in *ṣūrah al-Zumar*: *And the Trumpet will be blown, and all who are in the heavens and all who are on earth will run away, except whom Allāh wills (to remain). Then it will be blown a second time and behold, they will be standing, looking on'* (Qur'an: 39:68).

²⁷⁷ Qur'an: 36:51

²⁷⁸ Linguistically 'intercession' means 'to make an odd number (al-witr) even (shaf'ul'. Technically it means 'to act on someone's behalf to gain some benefit or to prevent some harm'.

The Intercession (al-shafa'ah) on the Day of Judgement is divided into two types: 1) the specific (al-ikhṣā) intercession, meaning that which is specific only to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, and 2) the general (al-'āmm) intercession, meaning that which is general for the Prophet ﷺ as well as for others.

(unseen); they are all real and true): *Then as for him who will be given his record in his right hand, he surely will receive an easy reckoning. And will return back to his family in joy! But whoever is given his record behind his back (or in his right hand), he will invoke (for his) destruction. And he shall enter the Blazing Fire and (he shall be) made to taste its burning flames.*²⁷⁹

The *mizān* (Balance) has two scales and a tongue, by which the deeds are weighted (and it is real, existing with certain characteristics): *Then those whose Balance (of good deeds) are heavy, they are the successful. And those whose Balance (of good deeds) are light, they are those who lose their own selves, in Hell will they abide (forever).*²⁸⁰

For our Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ is the *ḥawḍ* (Basin)²⁸¹ on the Day of Resurrection; its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. Its drinking vessels are as numerous as the stars in the sky. Whoever drinks of it, will never again experience thirst²⁸². [The *ru'yah*, *shafā'ah* and *ḥawḍ*, are established in *mutawātir* narration of the highest degree and are real and not metaphoric.].

The *ṣirāṭ* (Bridge) is true. The righteous people will cross it [in various ways; some will crawl or walk over it, whilst other will pass over it quickly] and the evil ones will fall from it²⁸³ (therefore crossing the *ṣirāṭ* depends on one's deeds).

Our Prophet ﷺ will intercede for whoever enters the Fire from the people of his *Ummah* who have committed major sins. They will come out of it due to his *shafā'ah* (Intercession), but only after having been burned until they became ashes and charcoal. They will then enter Paradise due to his intercession. Intercession will also be done by the rest of the Prophets, believers and Angels²⁸⁴ (thus, the *shafā'ah* is not limited to the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ only, although his intercession is the greatest and reserved for him alone²⁸⁵).

²⁷⁹ Qurān: 84:7-12

²⁸⁰ Qurān: 23:102-103

²⁸¹ Al-ḥawḍ, is also often translated as 'the Fountain

²⁸² Al-Bukhārī, no. 6579 / Muslim, no. 2292.

²⁸³ Al-Bukhārī, no. 7439 / Muslim, no. 183.

²⁸⁴ See footnote no. 231

²⁸⁵ The following are the various types of *shafā'ah* (intercession) that are affirmed for Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ:

Other groups amongst the creation may intercede after they have been given permission from Allāh to do so, such as the intercession of the martyr²⁸⁶. Allāh Exalted is He, says: *And they cannot intercede except for him with whom He is pleased. And they stand in awe for fear of Him.*²⁸⁷ The intercession of the intercessors will be of no avail to the disbelievers (thus, the disbelievers will not benefit from intercession, except that intercession can be made for them to lighten their punishment and torment in Hell. For example, the intercession of the Prophet ﷺ for his uncle Abū Ṭālib, which will be for the lightning of his punishment. Regarding this type of intercession one can argue whether it is an actual intercession or not, as one might say it is Allāh's mercy instead. However, the majority have understood it as a type of intercession).

Jannah and Nār (Paradise and Hellfire) are two creations that will not cease to exist (and both are already existent, for the Prophet ﷺ saw them in reality. The 'aqidah of the Hanābilah is that the Hellfire, just as Paradise, will remain forever, and will not cease to exist at some point. Someone who insists on the idea of Paradise or Hellfire ceasing to exist at some point, becomes an innovator on account of his statement. However, labelling such a person as a disbeliever would be a step too

1. The great intercession (al-shafa'ah al-'uẓmā) which is specifically for the Prophet ﷺ, and this is his intercession for the coming of Allāh in order for the Judgement to begin.
2. His intercession for people whose good and bad deeds are equal, he will intercede for them to enter Paradise.
3. His intercession for another group of people for whom the Fire had been ordered, so he will intercede that they do not enter it.
4. His intercession for the raising of the ranks of those who have entered Paradise, that their rank be raised to one greater than what the reward for their actions would have given them.
5. His intercession for a people to be entered into Paradise without reckoning.
6. His intercession for the lightening of the punishment for those who deserve it, such as his intercession for his uncle Abū Ṭālib that his punishment be lightened.
7. His intercession for permission to be granted for all the Believers to enter Paradise.
8. His intercession for the people who committed major sins, amongst those who entered the Fire, that they may be brought out of it. This type is al-'am (generally for the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, the angels, the other prophets, and the believers).

²⁸⁶ Al-Tirmidhī (no. 1663): *There are six things with Allāh for the martyr. He is forgiven with the first flow of blood (the sufferer), he is shown his place in Paradise, he is protected from punishment in the grave, secured from the greatest terror, the crown of dignity is placed upon his head - and its gems are better than the world and what is in it, he is married to seventy-two wives from the ḥūr al-'ayn, and he may intercede for seventy of his close relatives.*

²⁸⁷ Qurān: 21: 28

far, as he still believes in paradise and the hellfire. If he is shown the evidences which do not agree with his view, and he still insists, then he has abandoned the clear āyāt from the Qurān, which state that Paradise and Hellfire will remain forever, in favour of ambiguous text and erroneous arguments, and he becomes an innovator on this account. The Prophet ﷺ will be the first to open the gates of Paradise, and the first one who will enter it. Therefore, the rest of the people will only enter after he ﷺ does. People who die will remain in their graves until the Day of Resurrection, and will not physically enter Paradise or Hell before that day, although they will be shown their final abodes while being in their graves.]. Paradise is the final resting place of the *swaliyā*²⁹⁶ of Allah, while the Hellfire is the place of punishment for His enemies. The inhabitants of Paradise will remain therein eternally: *Verily, the sinful evildoers will be in the punishment of Hell to remain in it eternally, (their torment) will not be lightened for them, and they will be plunged into destruction with deep regrets and sorrows.*²⁹⁷ [and the author did not say 'the inhabitants of the Hellfire', as he did with regards to Paradise; yet, he said 'the sinful evildoers', meaning the believers who have sinned will eventually be taken out of the Hellfire and their duration in it will vary.

Death will be brought in the form of a sturdy ram and slaughtered between Paradise and Hellfire. Then it will be said: *O inhabitants of Paradise! Eternity for you and no (more) death! O inhabitants of Hell! Eternity for you and no (more) death!*²⁹⁸ [so, death will be brought forward in a materialistic form and will be slaughtered; which means there will be no more death after this event and everyone will remain eternally in their final abode. This slaughtering will take place only after all the believers have been removed from the Hellfire and have entered Paradise].

²⁹⁶ *Swaliyā* is often translated as 'close friend' although it is not an accurate translation. It might be that the term 'ally' is more appropriate, however, a 'one word' translation in this case will not suffice and does injustice to the Arabic word.

²⁹⁷ Qurān: 43:74-75

²⁹⁸ Al-Bukhari, no. 4730 / Muslim, no. 2849

THE PROPHET ﷺ AND HIS COMPANIONS

وَمُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَازِمُ النَّبِيِّينَ وَسَيِّدُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، لَا يَصِحُّ إِيمَانُ عَبْدٍ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنَ بِرَسُولِهِ، وَيَشْهَدَ بِنَبَوِيَّتِهِ، وَلَا يَقْبَلُ شَيْءَ النَّاسِ فِي يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ إِلَّا بِخَفَاعِهِ، وَلَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ أُمَّةٌ إِلَّا بَعْدَ دُخُولِ أُمَّتِهِ. صَاحِبُ لَوَاءِ الْعَمْدِ، وَالنِّقَمِ الْمَحْمُودِ، وَالخَوْضِ الْمَرْوُودِ، وَهُوَ إِمَامُ النَّبِيِّينَ، وَخَطِيبُهُمْ، وَصَاحِبُ شَفَاعَتِهِمْ، أَمَّتُهُ خَيْرُ الْأُمَّةِ وَأَصْحَابُهُ خَيْرُ أَصْحَابِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ.

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Seal of the Prophets and the leader of those sent by Allah. The imān of a servant is not valid until he believes in his message and bears witness to his Prophethood. Mankind will not be judged on the Day of Resurrection except with his intercession. No nation will enter Paradise until his nation has entered it. He is the possessor of the Banner of Praise (al-lawā'i al-ḥamd), the most Praiseworthy Station (al-maqām al-maḥmūd) and the ḥawḍ. He is the leader of the Prophets, their spokesman and the one who possesses their intercession. His Ummah is the best of nations and his companions are the best of those who accompanied Prophets.

وَأَفْضَلُ أُمَّتِهِ أَبُو بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقُ، ثُمَّ عُمَرُ الْفَارُوقُ، ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ، ثُمَّ عَلِيٌّ الْمُرْتَضَى رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ. لَمَّا رَوَى عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: (كُنَّا نَقُولُ وَالنَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ خَيْرٌ: أَبُو بَكْرٍ، ثُمَّ عُمَرُ، ثُمَّ عُثْمَانُ. فَيَتْلُو ذَلِكَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَلَا يَنْكِرُهُ). وَصَحِّبَ الرَّوَاةُ عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: (خَيْرُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ بَعْدَ نَبِيِّهَا أَبُو بَكْرٍ ثُمَّ عُمَرُ، وَلَوْ شِئْتُ سَمَّيْتُ الْقَائِلَ). وَرَوَى أَبُو الدَّرَدَاءِ عَنْ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: «مَا مَلَغَتِ الشَّمْسُ وَلَا غَرَبَتْ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ عَلَى أَفْضَلِ رَجُلٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي (أَبِي بَكْرٍ). وَهُوَ أَخِي خَلْقِي بِالْجَلَالَةِ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى

اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ؛ لِفَضْلِهِ وَسَابِقِيهِ، وَتَقْدِيمِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَهُ فِي الصَّلَاةِ عَلَى خَاصِّ الصَّحَابَةِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ، وَإِجْمَاعِ الصَّحَابَةِ عَلَى تَقْدِيمِهِ وَمُتَابِعِهِ، وَلَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيُخَمِّعَهُمْ عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ. ثُمَّ مِنْ تَقْدِيمِ عُمَرُا لِفَضْلِهِ وَعَهْدِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ إِلَيْهِ. ثُمَّ عُضْدَانِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا لِتَقْدِيمِ أَهْلِ الشُّوْرَى لَهُ. ثُمَّ عَلِيٌّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ؛ لِفَضْلِهِ وَإِجْمَاعِ أَهْلِ غَضْرِبِهِ عَلَيْهِ. وَهَؤُلَاءِ الْخُلَفَاءُ الرَّاشِدُونَ الْمَهْدِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِيهِمْ: «عَلَيْكُمْ بِسُنَّتِي وَسُنَّةِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ الْمَهْدِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِي، عَضُّوا عَلَيْهَا بِالنَّوَاجِدِ». وَقَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «(الْخِلَافَةُ مِنْ بَعْدِي ثَلَاثُونَ سَنَةً)» فَكَانَ أَيْبَرُهَا جِلَافَةُ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

The best of his Ummah was Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (the truthful one), then 'Umar al-Farūq (the distinguisher), then 'Uthmān Dhū al-Nūrayn (Possessor of the two lights) and then 'Alī al-Murtaḍā (the one who attained Allāh's pleasure), may Allāh be pleased with all of them. This is based upon what has been reported by 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar, Allāh be pleased with him, that he said: 'We used to say, while the Prophet ﷺ was alive; Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān. This would reach the Prophet ﷺ and he would not deny it.' It is reported on the authority of 'Alī, Allāh be pleased with him, that he said: 'The best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Abū Bakr, then 'Umar. And if I wanted to, I would have named a third.' Abū al-Dardā' reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'The sun does not rise nor does it set upon anyone better, after the Prophets and the Messengers, than Abū Bakr.' He had the most right to the caliphate from all of the creation of Allāh, after the Prophet ﷺ; and this is due to his merits and his precedence, and also due to the Prophet ﷺ preferring him over all of his companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, to lead the prayer. It is also due to the ijma' of the companions in recognising his superiority and giving the pledge of allegiance to him. And Allāh would not have united them upon misguidance. Then after him was 'Umar, due to his merits and Abū Bakr's delegation of it to him. Then 'Uthmān, Allāh be

pleased with him, due to him being chosen by the members of the *shūrā* (council). Then 'Ali, Allāh be pleased with him, due to his merits and the *ijmā'* of the people of his time. These are the rightly guided caliphs about whom the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *'Stick to my Sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me. Bite onto it with your molar teeth.'* The Prophet ﷺ said: *'The caliphate after me will endure for thirty years.'* The last part of it occurred with the caliphate of 'Ali, Allāh be pleased with him.

وَنَشْهَدُ لِلْمُفَرَّةِ بِالْجَنَّةِ، كَمَا شَهِدَ لَهُمُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: «أَبُو بَكْرٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعُمَرُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعُثْمَانُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعَلِيٌّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَطَلْحَةُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَالزُّبَيْرُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَسَعْدُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَسَعِيدُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَوْفٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَأَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ». وَكُلُّ مَنْ شَهِدَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِالْجَنَّةِ شَهِدْنَا لَهُ بِهَا، كَقَوْلِي: «الْحَسَنُ وَالْحُسَيْنُ سَيِّدَا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ»، وَقَوْلِي لِثَابِتٍ بْنِ قَيْسٍ: «إِنَّهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ».

We testify for the ten who will be in Paradise, just as the Prophet ﷺ testified for them, when he said: 'Abū Bakr is in Paradise, Umar is in Paradise, Uthmān is in Paradise, 'Alī is in Paradise, Talha is in Paradise, al-Zubayr is in Paradise, Sa'd is in Paradise, Sa'id is in Paradise, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Awf is in Paradise, Abū 'Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāh is in Paradise' As for everyone else whom the Prophet ﷺ has testified will be in Paradise, then we bear witness to that. Such as his statement: *'Al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the leaders of the youth in Paradise.'* And his statement to Thābit b. Qays: *'Indeed, he is from the inhabitants of paradise.'*

وَلَا نَحْبِرُهُمْ لِأَخِيذٍ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْيَتْلَى بِجَنَّةٍ وَلَا نَارٍ إِلَّا مَنْ جَزَمَ لَهُ الرَّسُولُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، لَكِنَّا نَرْجُو لِلْمُحْسِنِ وَنَخَافُ عَلَى الْمُسِيءِ. وَلَا تَكْفُرُ أَحَدًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْيَتْلَى بِذَنْبٍ، وَلَا نُخْرِجُهُ عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ بِمِثْلِي.

We do not confirm for anyone from the People of the Qiblah that he will be in Paradise or Hellfire, except for the one whom the Messenger has confirmed it for. However, we hope for the one who does good, and we fear for the one who does evil. We do not declare anyone from the people of the Qiblah a disbeliever because of a sin, nor do we expel him out of Islām because of an action or deed.

وَرَى السُّخَّ وَالْجِهَادَ مَاضِيًا نَحْ طَاعَةِ كُلِّ إِمَامٍ بَرًّا كَانَ أَوْ فَاجِرًا، وَصَلَاةَ الْجُمُعَةِ خَلْفَهُمْ جَائِزَةً. قَالَ أَنَسٌ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «ثَلَاثٌ مِنْ أَصْلِ الْإِيمَانِ: الْكُفُّ عَنْهُ قَال: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. وَلَا تَكْفُرُهُ بِذَنْبٍ، وَلَا تُعْرِجُهُ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ بِسَمَلٍ. وَالْجِهَادُ نَاصِي مَنْتَهَى اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ خَشَى يُغَايِلَ آيَةَ أُمِّي الدُّجَالِ، لَا يَبْطِلُهُ حُزْرٌ خَائِي وَلَا عُدْلٌ غَادِي، وَالْإِيمَانُ بِالْأَقْدَارِ». رَوَاهُ أَبُو دَاوُدَ.

We hold that Hajj and Jihād are continuous along with the obedience to every Muslim leader, whether he is righteous or wicked. And the congregational prayer behind them is permissible. Anas reported that the Prophet ﷺ said. Three thing are from the foundation of imān; refraining from (harming) anyone who says 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah' We do not declare him a disbeliever due to a sin (which he has committed), nor do we expel him out of Islām due to an action (he has done). Jihād is everlasting from the time Allah sent me to the time when the last part of my Ummah will fight the Dajjal. It will not be invalidated by the oppression of the oppressor, or the justice of the just. And (the third is) the belief in al-qadar.' Narrated by Abu Dawūd.

وَمِنَ الشُّعْرِ نَزَلِي أَصْحَابَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَصَحْبَتُهُمْ، وَذِكْرُ مُحَابِيهِمْ، وَالتَّرْتُّمُ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَالِاسْتِغْفَارُ لَهُمْ، وَالْكَفُّ عَنْ ذِكْرِ مَسَاوِيهِمْ، وَمَا شَرَّ تَصْنُفِهِمْ، وَاعْتِبَادُ نَظْمِهِمْ، وَمَعْرِفَةُ سَابِقِهِمْ. قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: «وَالَّذِينَ خَاوُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا»، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى:

﴿مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ﴾. وقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: «لا تشبوا أصحابي، فإن أخذكم لولا أنفق يقل أخذ ذهاباً ما بلغ مد أحدهم ولا نصيفه».

From the Sunnah is; loyalty to the companions, to love them, mention their good qualities, and to ask Allāh to grant them mercy and to forgive them. And (also) refraining from mentioning their shortcomings and what they differed in, believing in their virtues and acknowledging their superiority. Allāh, the Exalted, says: 'And those who come after them say: 'our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed.'²⁹¹ And He, the Exalted, says: 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh. And those who are with him are severe against the disbelievers, while being merciful among themselves'²⁹² The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Do not revile my companions, for indeed if one you were to give in charity, the equivalent of the mount of Uhud in gold, it would not reach a mudd of one of them, not even half (of what they gave).'

وَمِنَ الشَّيْءِ التَّرَفُّعِي عَنِ أَزْوَاجِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، أَشْهَابِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، الْمُطَهَّرَاتِ، الْمُتَرَاتِبِ مِنْ كُلِّ سَوَاءٍ، أَفْضَلُهُنَّ خَدِيجَةُ بِنْتُ خُوَيْلِدٍ وَهَافِصَةُ الصَّدِيقَةُ بِنْتُ الصَّدِيقِ الَّتِي بَرَّأَهَا اللَّهُ فِي كِتَابِهِ، نَزَحَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، فَمَنْ قَلَّبَهَا بِمَا بَرَّأَهَا اللَّهُ مِنْهُ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ.

From the Sunnah is; being pleased with the wives of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Mothers of the Believers, the pure ones free of every type of evil. The best of them were Khadijah b. Khuwaylid and 'Ā'ishah b. al-Shiddiq, whom Allāh declared free in His Book (from the false accusations against her). She is the wife of the Prophet ﷺ in this world and the next. Whosoever falsely accuses her with that which Allāh declared her free of, has disbelieved in Allāh, the Most Great.

²⁹¹ Quran: 59:10

²⁹² Quran: 48:29

وَمُعَاوِيَةُ خَالَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَكَاتِبُ رُوحِي اللَّوْ، وَأَعَدَّ خُلَفَاءَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ رَجِيحِي اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

Mu'āwiyah is the uncle of the Believers, and one of those who wrote the Revelation of Allāh. He was one of the caliphs of the Muslims, Allāh be pleased with them.

Commentary: The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions

Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Seal of the Prophets and the leader of those sent by Allāh (additionally he is also the best of creation, and in that regard, he is better than the Throne ('arsh). His burial place is the best place on earth, even better than the Ka'bah, although Mecca in general is better than Medina, likewise the Sacred Mosque (i.e. Masjid al-Ḥaram) is considered better than the mosque of the Prophet ﷺ. And this is according to the mu'tamad position of the Madhhab]. **The imān of a servant is not valid until he believes in his message and bears witness to his Prophethood.** Mankind will not be judged on the Day of Judgement except with his intercession. And no nation will enter Paradise, until his nation has entered it. He is the possessor of the Banner of Praise (al-lawā'ī al-ḥamd), the Praiseworthy Station (al-maqām al-maḥmūd) and the ḥawq. He is the leader of the Prophets, their spokesman and the one who possesses their intercession. His Ummah is the best of nations and his companions are the best of those who accompanied Prophets.

The best of his Ummah was Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddiq (the truthful one), then 'Umar al-Farūq (the distinguisher), then 'Uthmān Dhū al-Nūrayn (Possessor of the two lights) and then 'Alī al-Murtaḍā (the one who attained Allāh's pleasure), may Allāh be pleased with all of them. This is based upon what has been reported by 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar, that he said: *We used to say, while the Prophet ﷺ was alive; Abū Bakr, then Umar, then Uthmān. This would reach the Prophet ﷺ and he would not deny it.*²⁹³ It is reported on the authority

²⁹³ Al-Bukhārī, no. 3655 / Abo Dawūd, no. 4628 / al-Tirmidhī, no. 3707, and these narrations all stop after mentioning 'Uthmān. Imām Ahmad does transmit a report in *al-Musnad*.

of 'Alī, that he said: *The best of this Ummah after its Prophet is Abū Bakr, then 'Umar. And if I wanted to, I would have named a third.*⁷⁹⁴ Abū al-Dardā' reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: *The sun does not rise nor does it set upon anyone better, after the Prophets and the Messengers, than Abū Bakr.*⁷⁹⁵ He had the most right to the caliphate from all of the creation of Allāh, after the Prophet ﷺ; and this is due to his merits and his precedence, and also due to the Prophet ﷺ preferring him over all of his companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, to lead the prayer. It is also due to the *ijmā'* of the companions in recognising his superiority and giving the pledge of allegiance to him. And Allāh would not have united them upon misguidance [and this is mentioned in the books of *uṣūl al-fiqh*; that the *ijmā'* has strength, because, the Prophet ﷺ mentioned that this Ummah can never gather upon something that is incorrect, and this narration is almost *mutawātir*⁷⁹⁶]. Then after him was 'Umar, due to his merits and Abū Bakr's delegation of it [meaning, the caliphate] to him [before he died]. Then 'Uthmān, Allāh be pleased with him, due to him being chosen by the members of the *shūrā* (council). Then, 'Alī, Allāh be pleased with him, due to his merits and the *ijmā'* of the people of his time on it [meaning, he was the most deserving of the caliphate from amongst his peers, according to them]. These are the rightly guided caliphs about whom the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said: *Stick to my Sunnah and the sunnah of the rightly-guided caliphs after me. Bite onto it* [i.e. His ﷺ Sunnah and those of the rightly-guided caliphs] *with your molar teeth.*⁷⁹⁷ [And this means one should follow it very strictly, and not diverge from it]. The Prophet ﷺ said: *The caliphate after me will endure for thirty years.*⁷⁹⁸ The last part of it

no. 4797, that mentions 'Alī as the third in line, based on certain qualities. However, this appears to be a weak report. Perhaps, Ibn Qudāmah combined these reports. Whatever the case may be, the names and order mentioned by Ibn Qudāmah are generally accepted as being correct.

⁷⁹⁴ *Imām Aḥmad in al-Musnad*, no. 1060 / *Faḍl 'il al-Sahābah*, no. 397.

⁷⁹⁵ *Imām Aḥmad in Faḍl 'il al-Sahābah*, no. 135.

⁷⁹⁶ *Al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2167.

⁷⁹⁷ *Imām Aḥmad, al-Musnad*, no. 17145 / *Abū Dawūd*, no. 4607 / *al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2676.

⁷⁹⁸ *Abū Dawūd*, no. 4646 / *al-Tirmidhī*, no. 2226.

occurred with the caliphate of 'Alī, Allāh be pleased with him [yet, from the last six months of this specific time period was the rule of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, before he handed it over to Mu'āwiyah b. Abi Sufyan who's rule fell outside of the time mentioned in the aforementioned prophetic narration. Therefore, al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī may also be considered from the rightly-guided caliphs²⁹⁷].

We testify for the ten who will be in Paradise, just as the Prophet ﷺ testified for them, when he said: *Abū Bakr is in Paradise, Umar is in Paradise, Uthmān is in Paradise, 'Alī is in Paradise, Talḥa is in Paradise, al-Zubayr is in Paradise, Sa'd is in Paradise, Sa'īd is in Paradise, 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf is in Paradise, Abū Ubaydah b. al-Jarrāḥ is in Paradise.*²⁹⁸ As for everyone else whom the Prophet ﷺ has testified will be in Paradise, then we bear witness to that. Such as his statement: *'Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the leaders of the youth in Paradise.*²⁹⁹ And his statement to Thābit b. Qays: *Indeed, he is from the inhabitants of Paradise.*³⁰⁰

We do not confirm [with certainty] for anyone from the People of the Qiblah that he will be in Paradise or the Hellfire, except for the one whom the Messenger has confirmed it for. However, we hope for the one who does good [that he shall enter Paradise], and we fear for the one who does evil [that he will enter Hellfire]. So, whether Muslim or a disbeliever, their final abode (i.e. Paradise or Hellfire) is not determined at all by people. Maybe a person was in fact the opposite of what people said, for only Allāh knows the true reality of a person. However, in general it can be said that the disbeliever will go to the hellfire, and the Muslim will enter paradise]. We do not declare anyone from the People of the Qiblah a disbeliever because of a sin [he has committed, like leaving the Prayer for example, until he is tried

²⁹⁷ The Prophet ﷺ died in 11H, which means that the period of the caliphate he mentioned would endure until 41H. Al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī took over the caliphate after his father 'Alī died (40H). He subsequently held this position for seven months, after which he surrendered his reign to Mu'āwiyah in the year 41H. This shows that his reign was within the period of the rightly-guided caliphs, as described by the prophet ﷺ.

²⁹⁸ Imam Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 1675 / *al-Tirmidhi*, no. 3747.

²⁹⁹ Imam Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 10999 / *al-Tirmidhi*, no. 3768.

³⁰⁰ Imam Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 12399 / *al-Bukhārī*, no. 3613 / Muslim, no. 119.

and tested], nor do we expel him out of Islām because of an action or deed [that he has done, until it is confirmed what he meant by it. The trying and judging of a person is performed by the ruler, his deputies and the scholars, and further details regarding this can be found in the books of fiqh.

We hold that Ḥajj and Jihād are continuous along with the obedience to every Muslim leader, whether he is righteous or wicked [as long as he applies the shari'ah]. And the congregational prayer behind them is permissible [unless they are open sinners, which will make the congregational prayer impermissible behind them according to the relied upon opinion in the Hanbali madhhab]. Anas reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: *Three thing are from the foundation of imān; refraining from (harming) anyone who say None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh.* We do not declare him a disbeliever due to a sin (which he has committed), nor do we expel him out of Islām due to an action (he has done). The Jihād is everlasting from the time that Allāh sent me to the time when the last part of my Ummah will fight the Dajjal. It will not be invalidated by the oppression of the oppressor, or the justice of the just [although, the kufr of the disbeliever will invalidate it]. And (the third is) the belief in the qadar. Narrated by Abū Dawūd²⁰³ [however this narration is not authentic].

From the Sunnah is; loyalty to the companions, to love them, mention their good qualities (and to show kindness and respect to them), and to ask Allāh to grant them mercy and to forgive them. And (also) to refrain from mentioning their shortcomings and what they differed in [for example, what happened during the first fitnah between Mu'āwiyah and 'Alī], believing in their virtues and acknowledging their superiority [and acknowledging that they preceded us in Islām; meaning, they are better than the rest]. Allāh, the Exalted, says: *And those who come after them say; 'our Lord! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in Faith. And put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed.'*²⁰⁴ And He, the Exalted,

²⁰³ Abū Dawūd, no. 2532.

²⁰⁴ Qur'an: 59:10

says: *Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. And those who are with him are severe against the disbelievers, while being merciful among themselves*²⁰³ The Prophet ﷺ said: *Do not revile my companions, for indeed if one you were to give in charity, the equivalent of the mount of Uhud in gold, it would not reach a mudd [a type of measurement commonly used in the time of the Prophet ﷺ] of one of them, not even half (of what they give).*²⁰⁴

From the *Sunnah* is: being pleased with the wives of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, the Mothers of the Believers, the pure ones free from every type of evil. The best of them were Khadijah b. Khurwaylid and 'Ā'ishah b. al-Ṣiddiq, whom Allāh declared free in His Book (from the false accusations against her) [and this is regarding the story of the necklace and the slander (al-īfk)²⁰⁵]. She is the wife of the Prophet ﷺ in this world and the next. Whosoever falsely accuses her with that which Allāh declared her free of, has disbelieved in Allāh, the Most Great [because he has disbelieved in the Qurān. A general principle in the Madhhab states that such a person becomes a disbeliever, if the accusing is the result of *ijtihād*. However, if it is the result of *taqlid*, then such a person becomes an open sinner, yet, he is not to be regarded as a disbeliever. Therefore, one should not generalize and label all the Shi'ah as disbelievers, because of what they say and do although, one should hate those things. To conclude, one should be careful regarding making *takfir* of other Muslims.

Mu'awiyah is the [maternal] uncle of the Believers (as he is the brother of Umm Ḥabibah, who was one of the Prophet's wives), **and one of those who wrote the Revelation of Allāh. He was one of the caliphs of the Muslims** (who came straight after the period of the rightly-guided caliphs), **Allāh be pleased with him.**

²⁰³ Qurān 48:29

²⁰⁴ Imām Ahmad, *al-Musnad*, no. 11079 / *al-Bukhārī*, no. 3673 and Muslim, no. 2541

²⁰⁵ *al-Bukhārī*, no. 4141, in a very long *badīth* narrated by 'Ā'ishah.

OBEYING THE MUSLIM LEADER

وَمِنَ الشُّعْبَةِ السَّمْعُ وَالطَّاعَةُ لِأَيُّمَةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَأَمْرَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِرُحْمِهِمْ وَفَاجِرِهِمْ، مَا لَمْ يَأْمُرُوا بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا طَاعَةَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ.

From the Sunnah is; hearing and obeying the Muslim leaders and the leaders of the believers, the righteous from amongst them as well as the unrighteous ones as long as they do not order disobedience to Allāh. Verily, there is no obedience to anyone if it involves disobedience to Allāh.

وَمَنْ وَلِيَ الْخِلَافَةَ، وَاجْتَمَعَ عَلَيْهِ النَّاسُ وَرَضُوا بِهِ، أَوْ غَلَبَهُمْ بِسَبِيحِهِ حَتَّى صَارَ خَلِيفَةً، وَسَمِعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَخَشَعَتْ طَاعَتُهُ، وَخَرَقَتْ مُخَالَفَتُهُ وَالْخُرُوجُ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقِصُّ عَصَا الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

It is obligatory to obey whosoever is given the caliphate while the people are united in his selection and are pleased with him, or whoever became the caliph by overpowering the people with his sword and is called Leader of the Believers. Opposing him, revolting against him and sowing the seeds of dissension among the Muslim against him is forbidden.

Commentary: Obeying the Muslim leader

From the Sunnah is; hearing and obeying the Muslim leaders and the rulers of the believers, the righteous from among them as well as the unrighteous ones as long as they do not order the disobedience to Allāh [so, when he rules with something other than the shari'ah he orders disobedience. In this case he is not to be followed or obeyed]. Verily, there is no obedience to anyone if it involves disobedience to Allāh [and this ruler should be disobeyed and

can even be fought in some cases, but this is related to the *maṣlahah* (public interest and benefit). For example, if fighting the ruler leads to widespread bloodshed or worsens the affairs of the Muslims, then it should be avoided and not fighting him will be considered the lesser of the two evils. It is important to emphasize that the scholars should be consulted for a ruling regarding fighting the ruler or not.).

It is obligatory to obey whosoever is given the caliphate while the people are united in his selection and are pleased with him, or whoever became the caliph by overcoming the people with his sword [the act of 'overpowering people with the sword' by using armed force might be prohibited, however, it being prohibited is irrelevant to the issue of keeping Muslims safe, and stopping any bloodshed by obeying this person as long as he keeps the religion safe] **and is called Leader of the Believers** [it is not necessary that the people and/or scholars proclaim him leader of the believers. He himself can proclaim to be leader of the believers as he has the position and army to support his claim. If there is a case where two parties proclaim themselves to be the rightful caliph, then the one who proclaimed it first is to be followed²⁰⁰]. **Opposing him, revolting against him and sowing the seeds of dissension among the Muslim against him** [thereby, breaking their unity], **is forbidden.**

²⁰⁰ In his regard Muslims transmitted in his *Sahih*, no. 1853: "When oath of allegiance has been taken for two caliphs, tell the one for whom the oath was taken later."

ABANDONING THE PEOPLE OF INNOVATION

وَمِنَ الشُّعْبِ هِجْرَانُ أَهْلِ الْبِدْعِ وَمُتَابَعَتُهُمْ، وَتَرْكُ الْجِدَالِ وَالْحُصُونَاتِ فِي الدِّينِ، وَتَرْكُ الشُّطْرِ فِي كُتُبِ الْمُنْدَغَةِ وَالْإِضْمَاءِ إِلَى كَلَامِهِمْ، وَكُلُّ مُحَدَثَةٍ فِي الدِّينِ بِدْعَةٌ.

And from the Sunnah is; abandoning of the People of Innovations (Ahl al-Bid'ah) and distinguishing oneself from them, leaving arguing and disputing in the religion, and not looking into the books of the innovators or listening attentively to their speech. And every newly invented matter in the religion is an innovation.

وَكُلُّ مُتَّبِعٍ بِغَيْرِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَالسُّنَّةِ مُنْدَغٌ: كَالرَّافِضِيَّةِ، وَالْجَاهِمِيَّةِ، وَالْخَوَارِجِ، وَالْقَدَرِيَّةِ، وَالْمُرْجِيَّةِ، وَالْمُعْتَزِّلَةِ، وَالْكَرَامِيَّةِ، وَالْكَلَابِيَّةِ، وَنَظَائِرِهِمْ، فَهَؤُلَاءِ فِرْقَةُ الضَّلَالِ وَطَوَائِفُ الْبِدْعِ أَعَاذَنَا اللَّهُ مِنْهَا.

Anyone who names himself with other than Islam and the Sunnah is an innovator, such as the Rāfiḡah, the Jahmiyyah, the Khawārij, the Qadariyyah, the Murji'ah, the Mu'tazilah, the Karrāmiyyah, the Kullābiyyah and those similar to them. These are sects of misguidance and parties of innovation. May Allāh grant us refuge from them.

Commentary: Abandoning the People of Innovation

And from the Sunnah is; abandoning of the People of Innovations (Ahl al-Bid'ah) and distinguishing oneself from them (it is an obligation to abandon innovators, in order for their hearts to be reminded of their corrupted ways and to compel them to cease their innovation. Additionally, when it is known that a certain individual or group should be abandoned or boycotted, then this act of abandonment helps to make others aware of their erroneous and abhorrent positions. The evidence for the abandonment of the innovator is what has been

narrated by Ibn 'Umar from the Prophet ﷺ, that he said: *The Qadariyyah are the Magians of this community. If they are ill, do not visit them, and if they die, do not attend their funerals.*²⁰⁹

Furthermore, individuals are either scholars or layman. Concerning the scholar, if he befriends an innovator, agrees with his innovations and believes their kufr, then this scholar will be accused with regards to his aqidaḥ. With regards to the layman, if he befriends the innovators and gets along with them, then the innovators own position will strengthen due to the layman's ignorance. With all this in mind, it becomes clear that it is an obligation to reject innovators and their innovations by abandonment of them and their innovations which may actually be, or lead to kufr in certain cases], **leaving arguing and disputing in religion, and not looking into the books of the innovators and listening attentively to their speech** [and this is in general for all Muslims, although the scholars are subject to different rulings as at times they need to argue and dispute with innovators and look into their books in order to refute them so as to protect the religion]. **And every newly invented matter in the Religion [itself] is an innovation**²¹⁰ [it concerns innovations into the religion itself, not innovations related to the religion because all of one's life is related to the religion. So, to classify everything that is newly invented as an innovation would be highly problematic for one's life. For example, when one has a job and works to earn money to buy books in order to study the Religion, then in that case his job is related to the religion. When something is newly invented in this job, it is not classified as an innovation. However, when it is something newly invented in the religion itself such an extra type of prayer or fast and the like, then it is classified as an innovation].

Anyone who names himself with other than Islām and the Sunnaḥ is an innovator, such as the Rāfiḍaḥ, the Jahmiyyaḥ, the Khawārij, the Qadariyyaḥ, the Murji'aḥ, the Mu'tazilah, the Karrāmiyyaḥ, the Kullābiyyaḥ and those similar to them. These are sects of misguidance and parties of innovation [in a general

²⁰⁹ Abū Dawūd, no. 4691.

²¹⁰ Abū Dawūd, no. 4607 / al-Nasā'ī, no. 1578: 'every newly-invented matter is an innovation...'

sense; including all of their branches. The author did not mention the Ashā'irah and the Maturidiyah specifically, indicating perhaps that he did not consider them from amongst the sects of misguidance and innovation, categorically, even though he spoke harshly of the Ashā'irah in his other books such as *Tahrim al-Nazar*. Therefore, it may be understood that his critique, including his harsh words, regarding the Ashā'irah is more specific and is directed at particular opinions and methods of theirs. This ties in with what was mentioned earlier with regards to their two opinions regarding the Attributes of Allāh; one opinion being rejected by the Ḥanābilah while they both agree on the other (i.e. tafwid or general ta'wil). **May Allāh grant us refuge from them.**

CONCERNING TAQLĪD AND IJTIHĀD

وَأَمَّا انْتِسَابُ إِلَى إِمَامٍ فِي فُرُوعِ الدِّينِ كَالطَّوَائِفِ الْأَرْبَعِ فَلَيْسَ بِمَنْعُومٍ، فَإِنَّ الْإِجْتِلَالَ
فِي الْفُرُوعِ رَحْمَةٌ، وَالْمُخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ مَحْمُودُونَ فِي إِحْيَائِهِمْ، مُتَابِرُونَ فِي اخْتِلَافِهِمْ،
وَإِجْتِلَالُهُمْ رَحْمَةٌ وَاسِعَةٌ، وَاتِّفَاقُهُمْ حُجَّةٌ قَائِلَةٌ.

As for ascribing oneself to an imām in the subsidiary issues of religion, such as the four madhhāhib, then this is not something blameworthy. For indeed, the differing in the subsidiary issues of religion is a mercy and those who differ in it, are praiseworthy in their differing; and they will be rewarded for their ijtihād. Their differing is a vast mercy and their agreement is a decisive proof.

Commentary: Concerning Taqlid and Ijtihād

As for ascribing oneself to an imām in the subsidiary issues of Religion [meaning, issues of fiqh], **such as the four Madhāhib** [by referring to oneself as Hanbalī, Mālikī, Shāfi'ī or Hanafī], **then this is not something blameworthy** [and the words of the author indicate something that is more general than taqlid for a mujtahid can also ascribe himself to a particular madhhab, always agreeing in his ijtihād with the positions of the scholars of that madhhab. This is what al-Suyūṭī mentions about himself, saying: 'I never followed al-Shāfi'ī, but whenever I did ijtihād I reached the same conclusion (as him)']. **For indeed, the differing in the subsidiary issues of religion is a mercy and those who differ in it, are praiseworthy in their differing** [meaning, it is not the actual differing between the scholars that is praiseworthy, but it is the reaching of different opinions through their ijtihād that is praiseworthy and they will be rewarded even if they were wrong.]; **and they will be rewarded for their ijtihād. Their differing is a vast mercy and their agreement is a decisive proof.**

CLOSING REMARKS

نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَعْصِمَنَا مِنَ الْبِدْعِ وَالْهَيْعَةِ، وَيُخَيِّتَنَا عَلَى الْإِسْلَامِ وَالسُّنَّةِ، وَيَجْعَلَنَا مِنْ
بَشِيعَةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ، وَيَجْعَلَنَا فِي رُفْقِهِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ
بِرَحْمَتِهِ وَتَضَلُّبِهِ آمِينَ.

We ask Allah that he protects us from innovation and trials and that He causes us to live upon Islām and the Sunnah. And that He makes us from among those who strictly follow the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when alive and that He resurrects us in his company after death, through His *Rahmah* and His *Faql*. *Āmin*.

وَهَذَا آخِرُ الْمُتَقَدِّدِ. وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَحْدَهُ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ
وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا.

This is the end of the 'aqidaḥ. All Praise is due to Allāh alone, and may Allāh's peace and blessing be upon our leader Muḥammad, his family and his Companions.



This was written by one in need of the pardon of his Lord al-Ghani,
Muwaffaq al-Din, Yūsuf b. Šādiq al-Ḥanbalī, and it was finished on the
night of the 1st of the month of Rajab, 1441AH/February 25, 2020.

And all praise is due to Allāh.

May the peace and blessing of Allāh be upon our master Muḥammad
and his followers and companions.



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